



JANUARY—FEBRUARY—MARCH 2024

CONTACT US

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



P.O Box 3065
Portland, OR 97208-3065
Ph. 503-248-0102
www.portlandtcf.org

“A Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families
Who Have Experienced the Death of a Child”

Portland, Oregon

“Two things can be true simultaneously: you can be heartbroken and bereft on one side AND you can be filled with gratitude for the amazing love that was in your life (and still is in your life, actually).

Sorrow and joy exist side by side. Both are true and both are real.”

~ Ashley Davis-Bush

Tissues, Tears & Treasures

A circle of chairs and boxes of tissues, a roomful of tears and emotional issues.

So many things different and yet all the same, hearts lost in a fog of loss and of pain.

Slowly I have found I can reach out to others who are newly bereaved fathers and mothers.

Frightening at first, I did not want to enter in the strange group, and be in the center.

Those who have journeyed, much further than me, reached out in comfort, listened quietly.

Strength I have found in this circle of chairs, to grieve and to heal and to show that we care.

What I soon learned, as we sat side by side, we were bound by the love of our children who died.

Each shattered heart spoke, and the tissues were passed, we never avoid speaking of the past.

~ Diane Barta, Tony's Mom, TCF, Portland, OR

Each shattered heart, desperately seeking a moment of peace, from the pain and weeping.

This circle of friends, have found a bond, and here I'm still known as "Tony's Mom".



Zoom meetings are now available on the 3rd Tuesday of each month
Contact Carolyn Harrington to participate in the Zoom meeting
503-307-8450 ~ linerharrington@gmail.com

PLEASE JOIN US ON THE 1ST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH @ 10:30 AM

*We have resumed in-person physical meetings located at
First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson, Rm. #134, Portland, OR 97205

FOR MORE INFORMATION: (503) 248-0102

Chapter Leader

Carolyn Harrington
Ph. 503-307-8450
linerharrington@gmail.com

Saturday Leaders

Jeff Littman & Peggy Smith
503-284-2725
jwlittman@comcast.net

Treasurer

Nancy Best
(503) 260-0378
jagstaruar@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Debra Moon
503-849-1179
debsmoon@gmail.com



WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization composed of bereaved parents/grandparents & siblings. We offer friendship and understanding. 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/sibling and about the feelings they experience 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/sibling, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings & issues that evolve around the death of a child.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

THE MUSIC BOX



WHO YOU'D BE TODAY
by Kenny Chesney
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ne3cz9eUsQ&t=1s>

CALENDAR

- January 1—New Year's Day
- January 15—Martin Luther King Day
- February 14—Valentine's Day
- February 19—President's Day
- March 17—St. Patrick's Day
- March 19—Spring Equinox
- March 31—Easter



We Need Not Walk Alone magazine shares poems, articles, and expressions that touch the hearts of bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. Items in the magazine offer different perspectives and experiences of grief from those who have been bereaved for varying lengths of time. We hope that you find the magazine relatable, supportive and filled with hope.

You can find this magazine at www.compassionatefriends.org



Save the Date
TCF's 47th National Conference
July 12—14, 2024 in New Orleans, LA



OTHER TCF CHAPTERS IN THE AREA

CLACKAMAS COUNTY CHAPTER #2047

4th Tuesday of the month 7:00 pm.
NAMI, 10202 SE 32nd Ave., Suite 501, Milwaukie, OR 97222

Phone: Mary (503) 266-2677 or Karen (503) 982-4711
Email: tcfclackamascounty@mail.com

WASHINGTON COUNTY CHAPTER #1901

2nd Tuesday of the month 6:30—8:30 pm.
Reeds Crossing Health Center Building—Conference Room
7305 SE Circuit Dr., Hillsboro, OR

Phone contact: Phyllis H. (503) 310-2504

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Just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card!! Through their Community Rewards Program they donate to local community organizations/nonprofits of your choice. You just link your Rewards Card and scan it every time you shop at Freddy's.

**Whenever you use your Rewards Card you will be helping Portland TCF earn a donation from Fred Meyer.*

**You will still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points & Rebates, just as you do today.*

Please see page 12 for more information.



Wintertime—Bleak & Sad

~ Susan Arlen, M.D., Somerville, NJ

There are conditions that affect human beings that are caused by sunlight deprivation. Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a form of depression that may occur during the months of decreased sunlight. The bereaved, who are already experiencing conditions akin to depression, or actual depression, can feel even worse during the winter months. Already depleted energy can decrease still further. Feelings of loss and sadness can intensify, as can feelings of futility.

Bleak days can exacerbate bleak lives. It can become difficult to motivate oneself to do anything. It is very important to recognize that SAD is time-limited and seasonal. It is crucial for the bereaved to realize that the winter months can exacerbate their already low feelings and energy levels. Here are some tips to help you cope with winter bleakness:

- ♥ Take a clue from the animals and plants. If you need to slow down or rest more, permit yourself to do so without chastising yourself.
- ♥ Get as much sunlight and daylight as possible (even on overcast days, some sunlight gets through). There are special bulbs and light-boxes that con-

tain the same light spectrum as the sun (without the dangerous ultra-violet rays). If needed, invest in one of those bulbs. Using them 20 minutes a day can do wonders in lifting spirits that are down due to sunlight deprivation.

- ♥ As difficult as it is to motivate yourself, make sure that you get regular aerobic exercise at least three times a week for 20 minutes each time. This can be done in the form of a brisk walk out-of-doors. Being out-of-doors puts you in the fresh air and sunlight. Walking gets all of your body systems going without straining them. It's also a chance to be alone with your thoughts while moving. This can help your thoughts to move along if they have become stuck.
- ♥ Plan occasions and/or outings you can look forward to, then make yourself carry them out.
- ♥ Speak to other people who have gone through similar experiences.
- ♥ Pamper yourself. Go to a spa; have a massage, take a long, leisurely bath.
- ♥ Reach out to other people. Try to do something to help someone else. You can make a dif-

ference in someone else's life, with the secondary benefit of taking your thoughts off yourself for a while.

- ♥ Beware of alcohol. While it may dull the edges of your pain for a short time, it is a depressant. In the long run, it is addictive and will complicate your situation.
- ♥ Physical complaints must be checked out with a physician.
- ♥ If you are deeply depressed, there are medicines your doctor can prescribe that are not addictive. They will not dull your intellectual function or rid you of your grief, but they will take the sharp edge off your depression and lift your spirits a bit.
- ♥ Be as kind to yourself as possible.
- ♥ The depths of winter are difficult. Bereavement makes any time of year and any situation more difficult to bear. I know that though you feel alone you are not. Though the gray winter seems endless it is not. And though your grief feels excruciating and interminable, it will soften. You will survive, and one day greet the awakening of spring with a smile, along with your tears.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Email your address change to Jenna Moon
Member Database at
jennarmoon84@gmail.com



To lose someone you love is to alter your life forever . . . The pain stops, there are new people, but the gap never closes . . . This hole in your heart is the shape of the one you lost ~ no one else can fit it.

~ Jeanette Winters, Healing Hugs

My grief village doesn't look like I imagined it would.



Some people just won't be able to show up in the way you want and need.

Others will leave you speechless in their desire and ability to sit with you through the pain.

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Softly,

*The memories envelope my consciousness playing out in my mind.
Here in my heart always bringing a smile. Now & forever I shall remember you.*

*Since you've been gone the memory we hold ever closer in our hearts.
Passage of time can't heal or erase the joy that you gave. Now brings saving grace.
Little child of my heart; I dream of you still. Never will we forget you.*

*During times of bitter anguish saying your name as if you were alive,
makes the yearning a little sweeter.*

~ Dana Censler, TCF, S. Central Kentucky KY



A Love Gift is a special note to your child that is printed in the newsletter. It is a wonderful way to remember and honor their memory! Families often submit these either on their birthday or anniversary date of their child, but it can be done at any time! There is no charge for printing a Love Gift, but many families choose to donate a tax deductible contribution to help support TCF expenses such as newsletter expenses, brochures, outreach, special events, etc. Please complete the form on the back page with your love note and submit with your favorite photo.

To include a picture with your Love Gift, please email your special photo to debsmoon@gmail.com or mail to TCF, PO Box 3065, Portland, OR 97208. *Your photo will be returned with current address.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

DEADLINE to submit for the next newsletter is MARCH 10, 2024

2023 IN-PERSON CANDLE LIGHTING EVENT

After three years of online ceremonies, it was wonderful to enjoy the Worldwide Candle Lighting together in-person!

As our volunteer Candle Readers each took the stage, their words and emotions filled the room with the bittersweet and tender language so familiar to all bereaved families. Thank you!

- Candle of Acceptance - Annie Adams, child Zenzi
- Candle of Understanding - Jenny Butler, daughter Lily
- Candle of Courage - Linda Johnson, son Richie
- Candle of Peace - Andy Zechnich, son Jackson
- Candle of Hope - Courtney Walker, daughter Trinity
- Candle of Love - Toni Jaffe, son Hunter

The room slowly filled with light as we each lit our candle and stood up for our child's birth month. Throughout the program, each family that attended heard their child's name read aloud, the sweetest sound is hearing their name!

April Sheppard, our special musical talent this year, shared her angelic voice and all hearts were touched. Thank you, Bev Waterworth (son Brett), for reaching out to April.

Always the highlight, **Our Childrens' Slideshow** presentation sadly gained nine new photos this year. If you would like your child's photo included for next year, please feel free to submit this information to: portlandtcf@gmail.com. (Send photo, name, date of birth.)

Hearing their names, seeing their photos, sharing this moment with other families also learning to live with loss during the hectic holiday season is truly special and unique.

If you were not able to join us this year, we encourage you to mark your calendars for the 2nd Sunday of December; we look forward to seeing you in 2024.

A heartfelt appreciation to all who participated and volunteered! We always welcome volunteers to help set-up, serve refreshments, and in any other way to make our events successful. (Each year we are also seeking performers.)

As we all begin another year in our journey of grief, TCF looks forward to supporting everyone with a caring heart, understanding and friendship.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE, WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

CONFIDENTIAL



WHAT IS A MEMORY?

What is a memory? It is the faculty of beholding the golden rays of the sunset, after the night has fallen. It is the ability to bear in mind the sweet melody after the instruments have ceased playing. It is a conversation with someone who can no longer speak . . . and seeing a smile on a face no longer here.

~ Karen Russell

Grief is love's shadow.
The presence of absence.
An unbearable weight
of emptiness.

- John Mark Green

The most painful tears are not the ones that fall from my eyes and cover my face, it's the ones that fall from my heart and cover my soul.

~ idlehearts.com



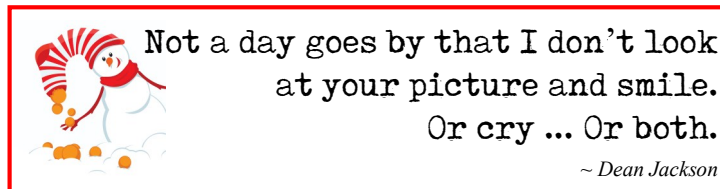
The Promise



Cold winds blow across frozen ponds.
Snow lies deep upon the fields.
But the change has begun.
Daylight hours increase slowly.
With each passing day later sunsets
are more apparent. Winter is ending.

For bereaved parents the change is painfully slow,
the progress not always apparent, but the promise is
the same. Winter will end. Spring will return.

~ Betty Stevens, TCF, Baltimore, MD



Not a day goes by that I don't look
at your picture and smile.
Or cry ... Or both.

~ Dean Jackson

New Year's Wishes for Bereaved Parents

To the newly bereaved: we wish you patience—patience with yourselves in the painful weeks, months, even years ahead.

To the bereaved sibling: we wish you and your parents a new understanding of each other's needs and the beginnings of good communication.

To those who are single parents: we wish you the inner resources we know you will need to cope, often alone with your loss.

To those experiencing marital difficulties after the death of your child: we wish you a special willingness and ability to communicate with each other.

To those of you who have suffered the death of more than one child: we wish you the endurance you will need to fight your way back to a meaningful life once again.

To those of you who have experienced the death of an only child or of all your children: we offer you our eternal gratitude for serving as such an inspiration to the rest of us.

To those of you who are plagued with guilt: we wish you the reassurances that you did the very best you could under the circumstances, and that your child knew that.

To those of you who are deeply depressed: we wish you the first steps out of the "valley of the shadow".

To all fathers and those of you unable to cry: we wish you healing tears and the ability to express your grief.

To those of you who are exhausted from grieving: we wish you the strength to face just one more hour, just one more day.

To all others with special needs that we have not mentioned: we wish you the understanding you need and the assurance that you are loved.

From a speech by former TCF President, Joe Rousseau

OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS:

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

www.sbsnw.org
Facebook—SBSNW
(503) 200-0382

*Groups are being held several times per month on virtual Zoom meetings & in-person meetings. Please visit website for meeting dates/times/locations in the Portland metro area.
NE Portland * SW Portland * Milwaukee * Gresham * Hillsboro

HELPING PARENTS HEAL

Annie & Marc Adams
hphportlandoregon@gmail.com
Annie (503)752-8024
Marc (503) 880-4467
www.helpingparentsheal.org

Support groups of grieving parents to connect with each other and with Spirit

BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

Ph. 503-699-8006
Spanish (503) 972-3376
Peace House, 2116 NE 18th St.
Portland ...2nd Mon 7 pm
Beaverton ...4th Thu 7 pm
Vancouver ...2nd Thu 7 pm
www.briefencounters.org

Support groups for parents who have experienced infant or pregnancy loss or who are considering or experiencing a subsequent pregnancy/adoption.

PARENTS OF MURDERED CHILDREN

Ph. 503-761-1304 or 503-656-8039
Peace House, 2116 NE 18th Ave
Portland... 1st Mon @ 7 pm
www.pomc.com/portland

SIDS RESOURCES OF OREGON

4035 NE Sandy Blvd Suite 209
Portland
Ph. 503-287-8265

IN THIS TOGETHER

(formerly Me too, & Company)
Contact: Meg McCauley
Ph. 503-890-7027
www.oregonhospice.org

Supports children & families who have experienced the death of a family member or friend.

THE DOUGY CENTER

Ph. 503-775-5683, www.dougy.org
3909 SE 52nd Ave., Portland, OR 97206
Provides safe place for children, teens, young adults & their families who are grieving a death.

STEPPING STONES

Ph. 360-696-5120

SW Washington Medical Center, Vancouver, WA
Support groups specialize in helping children with their grief.





Grief shifts.

It shifts with the seasons.
 It shifts with the time.
 It shifts with each day and night and new beginning.
 It shifts through phases and chapters and transitions.
 It shifts, constantly and with great intent.
 It's a constant transfer of pain and joy and longing and hope.

— xox, Chelsea Orlemiller

Grief to me is a strange thing. Offhand, it might sound like it's about weeping by a tombstone and laying some flowers. But, as a wise man once said, "Grief is love you cannot get rid of."

~ Author unknown



Where you used to be, there is a hole in the world, which I find myself constantly walking around in the daytime and falling into at night.
 I miss you like hell.

~ Edna St. Vincent Millay



I will always keep talking about you.
 You deserve to be remembered.

—UNKNOWN

We are pleased to offer our members reading material from our **LENDING LIBRARY!**



The profound challenges and trauma of grief often leave us with desperate, unanswered questions, fear and isolation. *Will our children be forgotten? How does one survive this unthinkable trauma? Will I ever be 'normal' again? Why do people stop speaking to us?* It is during this time that many of us seek answers, comfort and guidance in books authored by those who have experienced the death of a child. **We Are Not Alone.**

Through the generous donations of our members, TCF has acquired an inventory of books that are now available for you to borrow for a 3-month period. Books will be mailed directly to your home and will include a postage-paid envelope for the return. Visit our website www.portlandtcf.org/lending_library.aspx and browse through the inventory!

If you have books you would like to donate, please contact us & we will make arrangements for pick up.

FOR ONE MORE DAY

Mitch Albom
 #2019-6.12



For One More Day is the story of a mother and a son, and a relationship that lasts a lifetime and beyond. It explores the question: What would you do if you could spend one more day with a lost loved one?

"New Year, but Who Am I?"

Working in the industry I do, (fitness, gyms), a new year is all about setting goals, finding your passion and knowing your "why". Never was I so lost, so adrift, so unsure of anything after my son died. Purpose and passion were instantly erased in the moment I learned of the seemingly senseless and excruciatingly painful tragedy. Wrapped in shock and numbness, I waded through those firsts and first years with little thought of who I was. Perhaps more succinctly, who I would become. The challenge of my life has been to find a way to survive and still live with purpose. Not just wake up, get through, go to bed, repeat. For so long I believed that to heal from grief meant I would look and act like I did before. Similar to how we heal from a physical wound. And this is where I've gotten stuck. I was extroverted, now I'm called introverted. I was confident. Now my heart condemns me for failing to protect my son as a bear protects its bear cubs. Though I was nowhere near the accident. At the end of the day moms have all their kids. I do not. This has been my fiercest battle. It is a new year, but who am I, today? I am definitely not who I once was. I must face that I never will be. And that is ok. Life changes us all. But we are each created to add a sparkle to this world, the way a flower adds beauty to a garden. May we find the courage, together, to look within and see what light remains. And then share that light with a world that desperately needs hope. Hugs.

~ Michelle Thomason, Michael's mom, TCF, Portland OR

Days of our Lives

Before my son died, life was filled with one happy event after another. The days came and went, one month evolved into another, and the “special” days on the calendar added a new and joyful dimension to our otherwise routine lives. Philip’s sudden death changed every part of my life, including the way I now look at the days, the months, the seasons, and those special occasions that previously were times of great anticipation. Now my calendar is not always my friend; rather, it is a guide through my life as a bereaved parent. This is how my calendar now looks:

JANUARY—A new year begins, and I am here to see it enter. My son does not have the opportunity to grow, to learn and to develop as I do. When the new year dawns, I feel guilt because of all I have, all that he is missing.

FEBRUARY—How I miss the Valentine made by tiny hands and lots of glue, and the “I love you, Mommy” prompted by his dad. Do children still make silhouettes of Lincoln and Washington to tape on the refrigerator on Presidents’ Day?

MARCH—In the south, the trees are beginning to bud and daffodils are bobbing in the gentle breeze. I remember when he picked every one in the yard and offered them to me in his chubby hand. Then he blew his nose into them, trying to sniff their fragrance. Daffodils now make me sad.

APRIL—Easter and spring symbolize new life. Oh how I wish his life were here with me. There are no new Easter clothes to buy for him and no eggs to gather in his basket. His chair conspicuously empty at Easter lunch.

MAY—As soon as the Easter displays are taken down, Mother’s Day displays go up in the stores. I can wear a red rose because I rejoice that my own mom is still living, but how can I show the world that my heart is broken because I am a mother who has lost a child?

JUNE—The last day of school arrives and I wonder what he would want to do with his summer. Vacation provides a nice relief, but the homecoming is so painful that I wonder if it is worth the trip. My heart breaks for my husband because he lives through Father’s Day without his precious son.

(Continued on page 12.)

There are things that we don't want to happen but have to accept, things we don't want to know but have to learn, and people we can't live without but have to let go.

~ Author Unknown

grief is all the missed milestones

@GlitterAndGrief



About Handling Grief

I always wonder whether we should speak about “handling grief”. Grief is so much like a force of nature, like an avalanche, or an earthquake or a tornado. Such a force of nature handles *US* ... and we can only react to it. No matter how much we know and how well we prepare, we are never quite ready for grief.

If we keep in mind that grief is handling us, instead of expecting it to obey our own plans, chances for positive survival are much better. True, “*handling grief*” is only a word—yet this concept can inadvertently convey the wrong idea at the worst possible time. Otherwise we and our friends could well expect us to follow more traditional good manners in the face of unbearable stress. That would further drain our severely reduced emotional and mental resources. By acknowledging that grief handles us, we can retain a better grip on reality. If we accept the fact that grief is the master here, and a difficult master at that, we can learn to respect grief’s power and begin our healing work with a more useful perspective.

~ from Wintersun, by Sasha, TCF, Inland Empire newsletter

Birthdays

If it's your child's birthday month, we invite you to join our monthly meeting and share their story!

Birthdays hold treasured memories and are especially difficult for surviving parents and siblings; TCF offers a wonderful venue to honor and celebrate the precious life-story of your loved one. Taking a few minutes to share a picture, memento, award or even their favorite toy is a gentle reminder to all that *love continues and grows* with each passing year.



(Days of Our Lives, continued from page 11)

JULY—The fireworks are beautiful in the sky and I wonder if Philip can see them. I miss him at the parades and cookouts. I didn't get to teach him about our nation's birth.

AUGUST—It is now time to buy new school clothes, new crayons, and a backpack. The mall seems crowded with blonde, blue-eyed boys.

SEPTEMBER—The new school year begins and I see children all around me in various stages of anxiety, getting ready to meet new teachers and make new friends. I see boys and girls parade down the street to and from school, but my son is not among them.

OCTOBER—Halloween—What would he want to “be” this year? He-Man? A ghost? Thundercat? When the small children knock at my door for treats, a lump forms in my throat.

NOVEMBER—Sitting around a bountiful table with all of the relatives seems to make his absence even more pronounced than before. For three years after Philip's death, I was thankful for nothing; now I am thankful that I had him for even a little while. This is still my hardest time.

DECEMBER—Christmas and Hanukkah are family-centered occasions that cater to our children. What should we do with his stocking this year? What would Santa be bringing him if he were alive? Will I be able to sing the carols this year? His special ornament is on the tree and the memories of his two Christmases are bittersweet.

With a calendar so loaded with special times and special events, no wonder we bereaved parents are constantly on a roller coaster. It is understandable that at every meeting of The Compassionate Friends parents can be heard saying, “It has been a hard month.” When you add to these months the day of our child's birth, the date of his death, and birthdays of other family members, the days of our lives seem overwhelming.

It has been four years since Philip died, and I can honestly say that the days, months and special occasions do get easier to bear. I do believe, however, that it is unrealistic to think that they will ever be the same.

~ Elaine Grier, TCF, Atlanta, GA



Please Support Portland TCF . . .

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~ *Whenever you use your Rewards Card you will be helping Portland TCF earn a donation from Fred Meyer.*

~ *You will still earn your Rewards Points, Fuel Points and Rebates, just as you do today.*

Great Way for Families & Friends to Support TCF!

- Go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards
- Sign up online (even if you already have a card, you must create an online account)
- You will immediately receive an email to confirm your account (check your Spam or Junk Mail!)
- Sign up using your email address and password
- *From the top menu select: Reward —> Community Rewards*
- Click **“LINK YOUR CARD HERE”**
- Enter # FT805
- *Be sure to click the bubble!*
*The Compassionate Friends, P.O. Box 3065
Portland OR 97208*

TCF Portland earned **\$46.16** during the 3rd quarter!
2023 YTD = \$122.12 ~ 2022 YTD = \$137.02

~ **Thank you for participating
& enjoy shopping! ~**

WE CAN NEVER RETURN TO 'PLEASANTVILLE'

* * * * *

When I got home today, the movie, "Pleasantville" was on the TV. It's an interesting story of a young man who finds himself magically transported into a world much like a 1950s television show. Everything is ... pleasant. The world is laid out in "Leave It To Beaver" perfection ... and in black and white ... literally. There are no colors, just shades of gray. Everyone is fitted into roles and follows them nicely. There are no problems because people live their lives "properly". The movie's hero, who finds this world enjoyable at first, soon realizes that it is all wrong. People need to experience love, anger, sorrow, depression,

joy. People need colors, not black and white, to make life real. It occurred to me while I was watching the ending of this movie, that maybe the world has us bereaved parents all backward. We are seen by many as wrapped up in "black". They chide and deride us to return to what's "normal" ... *Come back to Pleasantville.* But our eyes have been opened by our children, their struggles and their deaths. We shout the reds and oranges of anger. We feel the soft blues and pinks ... echoes of our children's voices in our minds. *We Can Never Return to Pleasantville.* We understand the greens of quiet reflection in a crazed world rushing off to the mall looking for that one perfect gift ... our gift is in the time and love that we spent on our kids and continue to spend on others around us. We



shed sparkling crystalline tears reflecting a pain that springs from an ocean of courage that kept us going through days, months, and years of treatments, transplants, and tragedy. Pride for our children, all of our children, glows deeply within us like the magenta colors of the sky in a setting sun. and on some days we experience the warm golden glow of healing flowing gently through our bodies and souls. We can never return to the world of "Pleasantville" where hard things are hidden under a mask of unclear grays. Our eyes have been opened, not by death, but by the lives of our children.

~ Bill Sowers, *In memory of my daughter, Rachel Sowers, TCF, Topeka KS*

THE FAMOUS GRIEVE TOO

We are not the only ones who grieve the loss of our children. Famous people from all walks of life have mourned the loss of their children. Bereaved presidents include: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams, William Henry Harrison, John Tyler, Zachary Taylor, Franklin Pierce, Abraham Lincoln, Rutherford Hayes, James Garfield, Chester Arthur, William McKinley, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, and George Bush. [Editor's Note: Add Joe Biden]

"In this sad world of ours, sorrow comes to all... It comes with bitterest agony ... Perfect relief is not possible, except with time. You cannot now realize that you will ever feel better ... and yet this is a mistake. You are sure to be happy again. To know this, which is certainly true, will make you come less miserable now. I have experienced enough to know what I say."

~ Abraham Lincoln

"When he went, the power and glory of the presidency went with him."

~ Calvin Coolidge

"The death of a child is so painful, both emotionally and spiritually, that I truly wondered if my own heart and spirit would ever heal ... I soon learned that I could help myself best by helping others ... it wasn't until Robin died that I truly threw myself into volunteer work. That precious little girl left our family a great legacy: I know George & I care more for every living person because of her. We learned firsthand the importance of reaching out to help because others had reached out to us during that crucial time."

~ Barbara Bush

"When you are new to grief, you learn there's no second-guessing it. It will have it's way with you. Don't be fooled by the statistics you've read: grief has no timetable."

~ Helen Hayes

"When the young bury the old time heals the pain and sorrow. But when the process is reversed, the sorrow remains forever."

~ Joseph P. Kennedy

"There is no tragedy in life like the death of a child: things never get back to the way they were."

~ Dwight D. Eisenhower



THIS IS A LISTING OF SEVERAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM THE NATIONAL COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

www.compassionatefriends.org

24/7 ONLINE SUPPORT

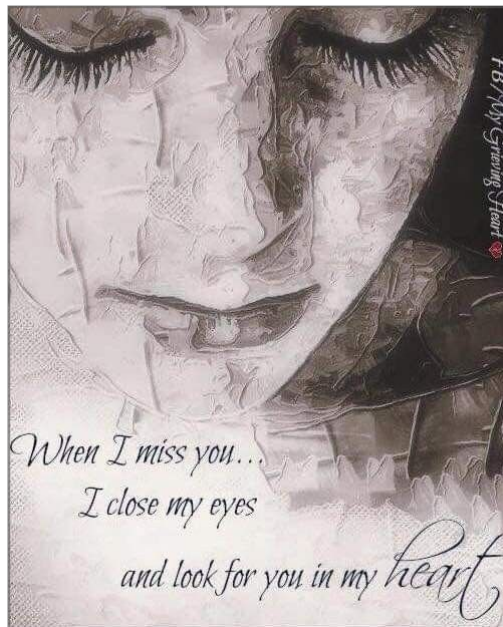
The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you’re experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Several days & times available.

*FirstTime Chatter Orientation ~ Parents/Grandparents/Siblings ~ Loss to Substance Related Causes
Bereaved More Than Three Years ~ No Surviving Children ~ Pregnancy/Infant Loss ~ Suicide Loss*

PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUPS

The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so we can confirm your request. If you are waiting approval, please message one of the administrators. Join requests to our Facebook groups must be requested personally, therefore when you wish to share the group with someone please pass along the link to the group.

Loss to COVID-19 & Other Infectious Diseases ~ Loss of a Stepchild ~ Loss of a Grandchild ~ Sibs (for bereaved siblings) ~ Bereaved LGBTQ Parents with Loss of a Child ~ Loss of a LGBTQ+ Child ~ Multiple Losses ~ Men in Grief ~ Daughterless Mothers ~ Sudden Death ~ Loss to Substance Related Causes ~ Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes ~ Loss to Suicide ~ Loss to Homicide ~ Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver ~ Loss to Cancer ~ Loss of a Child with Special Needs ~ Loss to Long-term Illness ~ Loss After Withdrawing Life Support ~ Loss to Mental Illness ~ Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth ~ Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Loss of an Infant Grandchild ~ Infant & Toddler Loss ~ Loss of a Child 4—12 Years Old ~ Loss of a Child 13—19 Years Old ~ Loss of an Adult Child ~ Loss of an Only Child/All Your Children ~ Finding Hope for Parents Through TCF SIBS ~ Grandparents Raising their Grandchildren ~ Bereaved Parents with Grandchild Visitation Issues ~ Inclusion and Diversity ~ Grieving with Faith and Hope ~ Secular Support ~ Reading Your Way Through Grief ~ Crafty Corner ~ Loss of a Child



Grief is a solitary journey. No one but you knows the gaping hole left in your life when someone you know has died.

And no one but you can mourn the silence that was once filled with laughter and song. It is the nature of love and of death to touch every person in a totally unique way. Comfort comes from knowing that people have made the same journey. And solace comes from understanding how others have learned to sing again.

~ Helen Steiner Rice

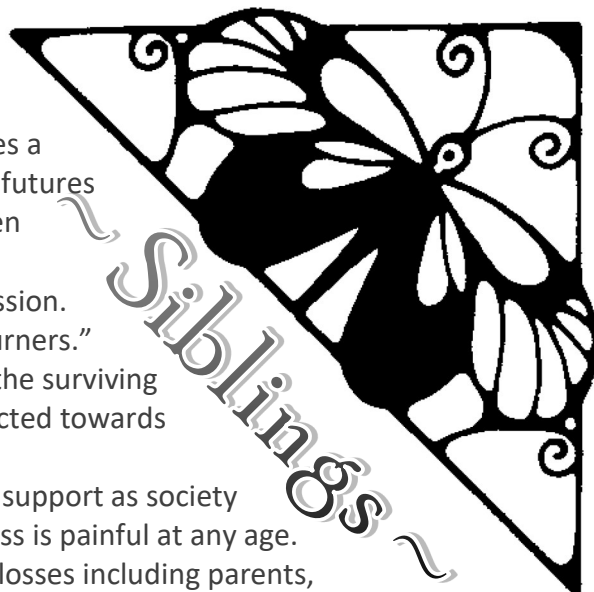


Losing a Sibling: A Different Kind of Grief

A child's loss of a parent or a parent's loss of a child leads to immeasurable grief over generational loss. Loss of a sibling creates a particular kind of "horizontal" grief in which shared histories and futures are fractured, creating uncertainties and insecurities that are often unacknowledged or misunderstood.

As a result, surviving siblings may suffer from long-term depression. Because of this, surviving siblings are often called "forgotten mourners." When an adult loses a sibling, especially one who lives far away, the surviving sibling is often left to mourn alone with much of the support directed towards the grieving spouse, children and parents.

When a senior citizen loses a sibling, there is often a lack of good support as society accepts death easier when it comes at an older age. But sibling loss is painful at any age. A senior who has lost a sibling is likely revisiting feelings of other losses including parents, spouses and friends, and likely has fewer family members to offer comfort and support.



COMMON FEELINGS FOR ADULT SURVIVORS OF A SIBLING

- Survivor guilt. Surviving siblings can suffer from feelings of failure to protect their sibling, or failure to be supportive of the sibling in life. Fear. A surviving sibling may become fearful of the end of life and have anxiety of how their own families will manage without them.
- Guilt over a rocky childhood. Siblings commonly outgrow childhood rivalries, but guilt over past tensions can surface even when the adult sibling relationship has been strong.
- Anger. A surviving sibling may feel stress or even anger over roles that he is now expected to fulfill such as caring for the nieces, nephews or aging parents.
- Distress. The decisions at time of death often fall onto surviving siblings who must agree on arrangements such as burial or cremation, whole body donation, organ donation, and memorial services. While Science Care whole body donation provides free cremation, transportation and filing of the death certificate, surviving siblings are often accountable for the financial burden of other types of arrangements.

"A sister is a little bit of childhood that can never be lost". -Marion C. Garretty

Getting over the loss, or allowing yourself not to

Siblings are always connected in the shared memories, in family discussions, and in memorials. Journaling or sharing your thoughts with others you do not know can also help healing. Remembering your sibling does not have to be sorrowful. Laugh at the memory of the time your sister tried to pierce your ears, or when your brother tried to teach you how to ride a bike.

Society often encourages bereaved individuals to feel guilty for grieving too long. There is no magic technique that will make the grief go away. There is no defined right way to grieve, length of time that one is expected to move on.

Moving on with your life does not have to mean forgetting your lost loved one. In fact, allowing yourself to hold your grief in a special place in your heart can help you to be okay to move on with your life.

In this moving video, Billy Bob Thornton talks about why it is OK to allow grief in your life:

<https://youtu.be/4Pn3y7S5FAw>

There are many ways to create a living memorial by turning grief into something positive, including continuing charitable work your sibling did, establishing a fund in honor of your sibling, and being a good listener for another person going through a similar loss. Remember your sibling by pursuing the happiness your sibling would want you to have.

<https://www.sciencecare.com/blog/losing-a-sibling-a-different-kind-of-grief>

The Compassionate Friends
Portland Chapter
P.O. Box 3065
Portland, OR 97208-3065



**JANUARY—FEBRUARY—MARCH
2024**



If you wish to make a tax-deductible LOVE GIFT donation, fill in the information below, send with a check for any amount to
Portland TCF, PO Box 3065 Portland, OR 97208-0102
OR, you may submit your love gift and photo online at <http://www.portlandtcf.org>

Month you would like it printed in newsletter: _____ Donation Amount: _____ Anonymous? YES
NO

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth: ___/___/___ Date of Death: ___/___/___

Your name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Email: _____ Zip: _____

Please make your check payable to TCF Portland or charge: VISA _____ Master Card _____ AMEX _____

Name as it appears on the card: _____ CVC# (on back of card) _____

Card # _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Expiration Date: ___/___/___ Zip code _____

Special Message (please include how you would like your message to be signed): _____

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our Portland TCF!