



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



We need not walk alone.



www.TylerTCF.org

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Volume 18, Issue 2

Tyler, Texas

February 2017

Monthly Group Meeting Tyler Area Meeting

3rd Monday of Each Month
1901 Rickety Ln., Tyler

Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547
www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Co-Chapter Leaders.....
Cheri Zucca & Trish Mann Taylor
SecretaryTrish Mann Taylor
Newsletter/WebsiteMary Lingle
Tyler Meeting Facilitators: Leslie & Don Dixon

Steering Committee: David & Teresa Terrell, Mary Lingle, Lisa Schoonover, Cheri Zucca, Don & Leslie Dixon, Janet Majors, Trisha Mann Taylor, Barbara Barton, Heather Ogg

Joan & Bill Campbell, Regional Coordinators: (972) 935-0673
TCF National: (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

The Meeting Agenda

6:30 p.m. - Meeting will begin with refreshments followed by announcement of birthdays and anniversaries and reading of the Credo. We will then have open discussion.

8:00 p.m. - Meeting will close by recognizing our childrens' names. Feel free to visit after the meeting or check out books from our library.

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A Dream Deferred

Christine died on November 6, 1992. She was six years old and in kindergarten, but at 35 pounds and in size 4 clothes, she looked much younger. Brain-damaged before birth by hydrocephalus, she needed hours of occupational and physical therapy to learn to crawl, brush her teeth, ride her tricycle, zip her coat. I massaged her, coaxed her, pleaded with her, praised her—and watched her grow.

I never knew what skill might confuse Christine. She walked at thirteen months but did not crawl until fifteen months. She fed herself at eighteen months but could not hug herself until she was four. When she was two and a half, she was given a complete battery of tests. Her motor skills ranged from less than one year to average.

But Christine passed the speech test at a six-year-old level. At four she composed music and created lyrics to go with her melodies. She was a natural in math and, in true brat fashion, lorded it over her older brother who was not. "It's OK that you're not good in math," she would tell Bobby. "Boys can't do math." Or she would walk up to him as he struggled over multiplication, point at a problem with her tiny hand, say, "That's wrong. You'll just have to do it again," and run before he gave her a well-deserved slap.

Christine had so much potential. Her therapists, her teachers, her pediatrician, her neurosurgeon marveled at what she could do. She was humming nursery rhymes at thirteen months, humming Tchaikovsky at three. There were days when I had visions of Christine as an adult, leading an orchestra as they played her Seventh Symphony or on stage singing her latest Country and Western hit.

And then at six it was all over. Her music—her songs—turned off. My dreams muted.

And I found myself asking a question another poet in very different circumstances asked himself. "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it merely fester? Or does it explode?" (Langston Hughes, "Harlem," 1953)

Two seasons later I have a partial and paradoxical answer. It does both. It does neither.

These have been moments of intense anguish, when I marveled that my body could hold my mood and live. There have been times when sadness has softly sifted through my daily routines, shadowing my cooking and my speaking. But under both, deeper than the explosion of Christine's unexpected death or the long sadness of her empty room, lies a certainty that Christine still exists, that we will one day be reunited.

A part of me crossed with her into death, still walks in love with her. Yet it is not a budding musician I walk with—or a brat—or a handicapped child. She was all of these. She is none of these. I walk with her. Her soul's whole now, bathed in light.

Relationships fade and change. Love lasts.

Sandra Ball, TCF Salem, NJ

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

We need not walk alone.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711





We need not walk alone.

“But let us not forget that this may be the year when love and hope and courage find each other somewhere in the darkness to lift their voice and speak: ‘Let there be light.’” —Marie Hofmocker

Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended their first TCF meeting last month.

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (held the third Monday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or to sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

Our chapter is operated entirely by volunteers dedicated to furthering the work of TCF. Your voluntary, tax deductible donations honor your loved one(s) in a meaningful way by enabling us to print and mail this newsletter and meet other expenses involved in reaching out to other grieving families (100% of funds are used for this outreach). Donations, along with the name of the person being honored, may be sent to:

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old 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 we have new parents. 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.”

Grief Resources

Note: Some resources are based on individual opinion and experience and are not officially endorsed by the organization. The hope is that you may find a grief resource helpful to you and your family. We will continue to build on our resources column. Please let us know of any of your personal recommendations. Thank you.

Compassionate Friends (International Website) compassionatefriends.org
Also offers grief support for **siblings & grandparents**

Children Are A Gift Foundation: www.childrenareagift.com

GriefShare: www.griefshare.org

MADD East Texas (Mothers Against Drunk Driving)
www.madd.org/local-offices/tx/east-texas

Smith County Victim Services Division
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html

The Hospice of East Texas: www.hospiceofeasttexas.org

Victim Services Division - Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Online Resource Directory
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs

Survivors of Suicide: www.allianceofhope.org

Samaritan Counseling of Tyler: www.scctyler.org

Tyler Counseling & Assessment, LLP: www.tyler-counseling.com

Angel Layettes brings comfort to families grieving over the loss of an infant from miscarriage, stillbirth or death shortly after birth, and honor and dignity to the memory of the precious baby. Angel Layettes provides without charge custom designed burial layettes and keepsakes. angellayettes.org • 903-534-5212

University of Texas at Tyler Psychology and Counseling and Training Clinic: 903-593-2348

The Cope Foundation: www.copefoundation.org

Grief Camps for Kids: www.moyerfoundation.org/programs

WINGS was established through Hospice of East Texas in 1993 to help children navigate the grieving process. WINGS, “a comprehensive bereavement program that provides both emotional support and grief education,” offers a camp (Camp G – grieve, grow and go forward) twice a year. For more information or to register for a grief support program, contact the Hospice of East Texas Bereavement Department at 903-266-3400 (Extension 127) or call 1-800-777-9860.

Group Meetings for Survivors of Trauma and Survivors of Suicide Loss, sponsored by Michael’s House of Hope at the New Life Worship Center, 18535 Hwy. 69 S., Tyler, room 620. Call Dr. Timothy M. Roddam at 903-681-3161 for more information. Survivors of Trauma meets the second Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m.



We’re on Facebook! Search for The Compassionate Friends of Tyler and Like our page.



The Compassionate Friends of Tyler

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, TX 75711

We are happy to send our newsletter to you. We hope that it is helpful to you to be kept informed of chapter resources and activities and that you still wish to receive our newsletters that contain excellent material relating to grief issues.

To keep our mailing list current, we do ask to hear from you each year making sure that our information is correct and that you still wish to receive our mailings. If we did not hear from you in the last year please indicate any appropriate choices below and return the form to the address at the bottom of this page.

Your Name: _____

Child’s Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Birth Date: _____ Death Date: _____ Cause of Death: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please check any of following that apply:

Due to the rising cost of postage, please send newsletters via email. My email address is _____.

I prefer not to receive the newsletter via email and would like to continue having a hard copy sent to the mailing address you have on file for me.

Please update my mailing address: _____

No thank you, I’d prefer to stop receiving the newsletter. (Newsletters are posted monthly on our website.)

Please include my child’s name and picture in the slide presentation at the Candle Lighting Ceremony.

Please include my child’s picture and information on the TCF Tyler Web site. (www.TylerTCF.org)

I am enclosing a memorial to support The Compassionate Friends in the amount of _____
Please make check payable to TCF

In memory of _____

Please use this gift for: TCF Newsletter Butterfly Release Candle Lighting TCF Events

The continuation of this chapter’s work depends on donations. If you have not taken the opportunity to give a donation in memory of your child please consider taking this time to give a gift that will help reach out to other newly bereaved parents.

We must have your written permission on file to use your child’s name and/or picture in the newsletter, Web site, Candle Lighting Ceremony or any other TCF event. Permission may be withdrawn at any time by written request. This information is used to maintain our Chapter Database. It is confidential and is only utilized for Chapter activities such as the newsletter.

(Signature) Date: _____

Please return completed form to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711



We need not walk alone.

"Finish your life with the enthusiasm and zest that you had when we were together. You owe this to me, but more importantly, you owe it to yourself. Life continues for both of us. I am with you because I love you. I am in the Light."
—Unknown

February Birthdays



Justin Clakley



Michelle "Missy" Green



Craig Howell



Jayson La'Drake Austin



Dylan Corey



Colleen Herriage



Caleb Scott Jones



Shane McDade



Jason Brown



Christopher Bullock



Walter Dale "Skipper" Winningham



Kody Maner



Sean Smith



Mary Jennifer Stone



Alexandria Conway



Justin Goodman



Chasen Sean Shirley



Cynthia Harper



John Andy Terrell



Cheryl Heerdt



Robert Ryan White



Ty Foster Mabry



Jeremiah Barker



T.J. Anderson



Ijuan Deshaun Simms



Candice Lingle



Karen Lowe



Scarlet Lynne Smith



James Arthur Jenkins



Roger Lee Rush



David Matthew (Matt) Morris



Natalie Whitehead



Steve Short



James Snyman



Kayla Denise Wager



Caleb Cecil Luther

Continued on next page.



We need not walk alone.

"The world loves closure, loves a thing that can, as they say, be gotten through. This is why it comes as a great surprise to find that loss is forever, that two decades after the event there are those occasions when something in you cries out at the continual presence of an absence." —Anna Quindlen

Support from Family and Friends

There are many things that a newly bereaved person needs during the first few weeks. One of the most important is support from their family and friends, who should be there to let them talk and to really listen, to give hugs, and to help with any chores the bereaved are not able to accomplish yet. It's hard for them to even think ahead to what should be done—washing clothes, cleaning, even answering the telephone may seem impossible. Many families have found it hard to go shopping for just basic groceries. They need someone to lend some thoughtful ideas and maybe see to some of these tasks a few times until their numbness has lightened a little.

Family and friends need to realize that the person who is grieving may never be the same. They will always be without their loved one and their lives will never be the same as before the death.

Since my daughter Teresa died I too have changed a lot; I have many new friends; I do things I'd have never done before, such as becoming a chapter leader, a newsletter editor and just recently writing articles on grief in these newspapers. I have more compassion towards others than before, and my interests are so very different now. If there were gifts resulting from a death, I'd say I have received many. Some people may think what I do is depressing. I feel it is helping others and at the same time helping me with my own healing.

Jackie Wesley, TCF East Central Indiana and Miami-Whitewater Chapters

Some People Say

"I wouldn't go to one of those grief meetings. It's morbid—people sitting around talking about the dead." *How wrong those people are!*

In so many ways, those who attend are saying, "I am hurting now, but I want to go on with my life." They are saying, "I am crying now, but I want to laugh again." They are saying, "I am sick in body and soul; help me get well." I see these things as healthy, not morbid.

It is not easy to walk into a meeting of any kind alone, especially one where the subject is very emotional; but once there, it takes only a few minutes to find out we are not alone; that there are those who care about us and want to help us. We see others hurting and suddenly we want to help them. I don't see that as morbid.

A grieving parent wants to talk about his beloved child who is no longer physically part of his life. That child has died with a tragic suddenness or as a result of an illness that usually takes older people. We want to know why or find a reason or some meaning in our child's death. I don't see any morbidity in trying to understand.

Memories of our child are all we have left. We have a driving need to hang on to those memories lest we lose that small bit of our child. It is not morbid to want to keep that small part alive forever, at least in our hearts and minds.

To walk into a bereaved parents' meeting is a loud shout—"I want to live and be happy again." It is a cry that: "My child is dead, but I know he would want me to go on and be a better person for the suffering." It is a confirmation that: "Even though part of my life is gone, there is a reason to go on." There is nothing morbid about doing what is necessary in order to re-enter the mainstream of life.

Margaret Gerner, TCF St. Louis, MO

A Valentine to All My Compassionate Friends

We who have had our hearts so badly broken know each other; we have lost a child, grandchild, sister or brother. It matters not if we've seen each other's faces. At first our hearts feel shredded and torn; we might even wish that we'd never been born. We don't understand how our lives went so wrong. Everyone tells us they're so glad that we're strong. All we know is that we hurt to the core; because our child, dearly loved is with us no more. With time, patience and understanding we begin to heal. We begin to accept what is and life starts to seem real. Each time we tell our tale, each hug we receive, puts a band aid on the hurting spots and gives us reason to believe that we will feel joy again; that life goes on; though we're never quite the same since our child is gone. Compassionate Friends teach us ways we can cope until we can live again and face life with hope. So to TCF members, whether we've met or not, thank you for the band aids on that bruised healing spot.

Kathy Hahn, TCF Lower Bucks, PA





We need not walk alone.

"We each choose different ways to reach for hope, to live our lives as well as we possibly can without our precious children. But eventually we all awaken to hope." —Annette Mennen Baldwin

And Then There Was Hope

Once, in what is now another life, I thought support groups were for someone else. I felt that with research, personal work, discussions with the elders in my family and wise friends, I would find all the answers I needed. This worked well until December of 2002. My son died. The death of my only child changed everything. My standard methods of "self help" were not going to get me through this. I needed more than even Solomon could give me. And I desperately needed hope.

My first meeting at Compassionate Friends was in March of 2003. My son had been gone almost three months; I was traumatized, I could not speak and I was doubtful that I would ever find even an obscure hint of peace in my life. April's meeting was somewhat better. I spoke a few words. In May I was rocked by the dual anticipation of Mother's Day and my son's birthday. In June I participated in the balloon liftoff; I sprained my ankle as we were walking back from the park. That night, as I set at home with ice on my ankle, I thought about the past five months. I realized that I was a different person than I had been earlier in the year. I was no longer the woman who walked into her first Compassionate Friends meeting because I was no longer walking alone. There were others at my side, in front of me, behind me, encouraging me, offering gentle suggestions, understanding and listening as I told my child's story over and over and over again.

I discovered that those who had walked this road before me were holding the lanterns of hope to cast light on my life path. It was these people and only these people who could reach me, who could teach me, whose voices could penetrate my fog, whose hearts could help me to begin the healing process.

By the time I marked the first anniversary of my son's death, I was beginning to discover that I had been transformed into a different person. Like my child whose body had died but whose spirit lived on symbolically in the butterfly, I had become a different person. I physically felt the pain of other parents. The first time I offered advice I sat in wonder at the realization that this very effort brought a little more light into my soul. Part of my healing process became the helping process.

Healing is what we seek, but we will never be "cured." As parents who have lost our children, we will never be the same people we were before our child died. I came to accept this fact. But I also found that we can live with this wound which, despite our initial certainty to the contrary, is not usually fatal. It is forever, it is painful, it is the worst wound a human can feel, but it is not fatal. Even when I was wracked with physical pain in my grief, the light of my Compassionate Friends gave me a new perspective, one of hope. Yes, a part of me died with my son, but the part that remains is constantly changing, continually evolving and always reaching for the light of hope. We each choose different ways to reach for hope, to live our lives as well as we possibly can without our precious children. But eventually we all awaken to hope.

My hope did not come as an epiphany out of the blue, but rather, it was more like a false dawn followed by true, muted rays of the morning sun. My hope was a process. I engaged the process by reaching out to others, listening, learning. I learned that the quick answer is rarely the right answer. I learned that silence often says more than words. I made peace with my pain, and I began to reach out to others with words of hope. For words were my gift to those who had given me so much.

At Compassionate Friends we see many new faces each year. Most parents continue their relationship with the group for at least a year, some for even two years. A few stay three years. The good news is that those who do not choose to come to meetings have chosen to go forward with their lives in a different way. Going forward with their lives is a very positive step and the goal of each bereaved parent. Not all of us stay; not all of us should stay. But for some of us, the hope continues to rekindle at each meeting. As we meet the newly bereaved and listen to their story, to their child's story, to the outpouring of pure agony and heartbreak, we hold the lantern. These parents will not know exactly what it is that we are doing as they are lost in the fog, as we all once were. Yet, we quietly hold the lantern, we keep the chapter moving forward, we meet parents and talk about their children, about our children, about grief, about life, about death, about pain and about hope. I have chosen to stay and hold the lantern for those who have followed me. For this gives me hope and peace and it keeps my child close to me in even the darkest of nights.

As grief is our companion, time moves forward; the pain becomes less searing, less encompassing. We learn to co-exist with our loss. We treasure our memories, we love our children and our hearts ache with our terrible loss. Yet, we have moved forward on the path. We are holding the lantern for others who find themselves on this path in life. We give this gift of hope with our presence which symbolizes the future of every newly bereaved parent. I remember my child as I walk this road with you.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF Katy, TX
October 24, 2006 ~ In memory of my son, Todd Mennen



We need not walk alone.

"The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one-day-at-a-time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life." —Helen Godwin

Thought from a Parent Who Lost an Older Child

Perhaps I had my child longer than you had yours, but thirty-eight years does not seem long. Perhaps there are more memories to hold in my heart, but I know yours are just as dear to you as mine are to me, even if your memories are memories of only one or two days. Your dreams for your child are gone. So are mine. Never did I imagine that I would have to deal with my child's death instead of him having to deal with mine. In thirty-eight years there was time to give me a legacy of three grandchildren. This is a very special blessing and one that I do not take for granted. My mission is to sustain the relationship with my three granddaughters who now live three thousand miles away from me.

My child died from a terminal illness that is not one of the "acceptable" diseases. My child died of alcohol and drug addiction. The tools for remission of this disease are placed in the hands of the person who has the disease. Even with the help of four treatment centers, the recovery was not to be. One day at a time, my recovery is taking place. The pain, after two and one half years, has gone to a place where it can be tolerated.

My story and my age may be different from yours, but the bottom line is the same: my child has gone to a place where I cannot go, and I miss him so much. The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one-day-at-a-time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life.

Helen Godwin, TCF Orange Park, Jacksonville, FL

Thanks for your donations and continued support of TCF of Tyler.

In loving memory of
Antonia Rothrock by
Elisa R. Watson



In loving memory of
Jared Sheets by
James & Linda
Crawford



In loving memory of
Candice Lingle by
Mary Lingle



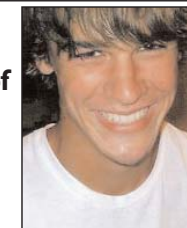
In loving memory of
Alex Conway by
Robert & Trisha
Taylor



In loving memory of
Andy Terrell by
David & Teresa
Terrell



In loving memory of
Chris O'Leary by
Merri Walsh



In loving memory of
Leah Zucca by
Jim & Cheri Zucca



In loving memory of
Chad Cavazos by
Dale Cavazos



In loving memory of
Christopher Loper
by Tina Loper



In loving memory of
Jared Sheets by
Carol & Shane
Johnson



In loving memory of
Stephanie Settle by
Danny & Pat Settle



Please share your stories, poems or love messages for inclusion in our newsletter.





We need not walk alone.

"Hope begins in the dark, the stubborn hope that if you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work—you don't give up." —Anne Lamott

Butterfly Wings, Bricks and Lead

When I saw her load of grief, it looked to me to be merely a light load of butterfly wings, as compared to my full load of heavy bricks. Then I saw another man, and he seemed to be carrying a small load of lead. But as I watched her step on the scales bearing her load of butterfly wings, the scales read "one ton." When he stepped on the scales with his load of lead, the scales also read "one ton." I knew my grief-load of bricks would weigh more, but those scales read for me, "one ton." Our loads of butterfly wings, lead and bricks weighed exactly the same to the one carrying that particular load of grief.

We bereaved parents often feel resentment when a non-bereaved person speaks about our child's death. HOW can THAT PERSON know or even dream of how I feel or what I am going through? These feelings may be justified. But when we begin to feel resentment toward another bereaved parent—"That child's death was easy compared to my child's death," "I have suffered more than she/he ever did"—we should remember that each of our grief-loads weighs two thousand pounds to the one under it. Compared to Rose Kennedy, who had one child in a mental institution, and lost one daughter and three sons in violent deaths, my grief-load begins to look as if it were made of gossamer soap bubbles, but when I again step on that scale, it still reads, "one ton."

Our grief-loads may appear to weigh less because we who are under them have grown stronger through time and grief process maturation. The load actually weighs no less; it is we who have grown stronger and can carry it more easily. Sometimes we can even completely ignore the weight that is still there. Always be careful in judging another's grief-load. Remember the lead, butterfly wings and those bricks, and how they all weigh the same to the one under that load of grief.

Tom Crouthamel, TCF Sarasota, FL

Alex Conway

**In loving memory
of Alex**

Robert & Trisha Taylor



This month's newsletter is sponsored by Robert & Trisha Taylor.

Newsletter sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.



We need not walk alone.

"We must embrace pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." —Kenji Miyazawa

February Birthdays Cont.



Aceyn Richards



Candace Beggs



Justin McIntyre



Jessica Spence



Timothy Andrew Wild



LaDerrius Darden

February Anniversaries



Josh Chambers



Austin Dixon



Lori Campbell



Cheryl Heerd



Richard Heerd



Jackie Heerd



Ryszard Spakovsky



Tiffany Johnston



Darell Bolton



Andrea Young



Austin Arvizo



Brandon Krpec



Michael Schmidt



James Brady Langston



Jasmine Dezereah Pruitt



Chance Aaron Chandler



Roger Lee Rush



Carly Smith



John Wallace



Adam Thomas Pritchard



Jayson La'Drake Austin



Karrie Voyles



Craig Howell



Kammon Gebo



Joel Tucker



Shelby Williams



Lucy Beerline



Kaleb Mize



Luciano Tessaro





We need not walk alone.

"Heaven knows we need never be ashamed of our tears, for they are rain upon the blinding dust of earth, overlying our hard hearts." —Charles Dickens

The Piano Sits Silent

I etch her name in the dust.
Run my hands over the keyboard,
too long untouched by the pianist;
The one no longer physically here,
who played the songs,
badly at times,
yet unstoppable in
her need to make music.
As if it was her mission
to get it right.
As if she knew there was little time
to master the melody.
So she played and played.
Melancholy tunes
that spoke of lives gone too soon.
I would call to her,
"You're playing too loud,
I can't hear myself think."
If I could just take back those words,
for I long to hear my
beloved child play the music,
that once rang through these halls.
Those uneven strains would be
the sweetest music to my ears.
I touch the ivories and hear
the foreign sound of this long
silent instrument.
And remember my precious child,
remember the joy
her efforts brought her...
Remembering, remembering...
Though my tears fall gently,
my heart smiles as I
recall the sweet sounds of her life.
And even as the piano sits silent,
My memories resound
and I recall the love, always the love.

Cathy Seehuetter, TCF St. Paul, MN

The Long Forever

You left us so quickly;
there were no goodbyes.
How long this forever,
your death and our lives.
The sadness, the anger,
the loneliness of three,
preferring four always,
how small, this new we.

Genesse Bourdeau Gentry
From Stars in the Deepest Night
—After the Death of a Child

But You're Absolutely Normal!

Grief is a normal reaction to loss, and it shows up in many ways you might not expect. If you've...

- been angry with doctors or nurses for not doing enough,
- been sleeping too much or not enough,
- noticed a change in appetite,
- felt no one understands what you're going through,
- felt friends should call more or call less or leave you alone or invite you along more often,
- bought things you didn't need,
- considered selling everything and moving,
- had headaches, upset stomachs, weakness, lethargy, more aches and pains,
- been unbearable, lonely, and depressed,
- been crabby,
- cried for no apparent reason,
- found yourself obsessed with thoughts of the deceased,
- been forgetful, confused, uncharacteristically absentminded,
- panicked over little things,
- felt guilty about things you have or haven't done,
- gone to the store every day,
- forgotten why you went somewhere,
- called friends and talked for a long time,
- called friends and wanted to hang up after only a brief conversation,
- not wanted to attend social functions you usually enjoyed,
- found yourself unable to concentrate on written material,
- been unable to remember what you just read,

...you're normal.

These are all common reactions to grief. They take up to two years (or more) to pass completely, but they will pass. You'll never forget the person who has died, but your life will again become normal, even if it is never exactly the same.

Take care of yourself. You will heal in time.

Joanne Bonelli, TCF Greater Boise Area, Idaho

Our condolences to former TCF Chapter Leader, Tina Loper (mom to Christopher, Johnathan and Heather), on the death of her mother, Judy.



We need not walk alone.

"When the world says, 'Give up,' hope whispers, 'Try it one more time.'" —Unknown

Love Gifts



Thanks to the following people who make a MONTHLY LOVE GIFT to TCF of Tyler:

(For monthly donors we will post photos of your children.)

- Merri Walsh in memory of Chris O'Leary - rent
- Carol & Shane Johnson in memory of Jared Sheets - rent
- Danny & Pat Settle in memory of Stephanie - rent
- Jim & Cheri Zucca in memory of Leah - rent
- Robert & Trisha Taylor in memory of Alex Conway - rent
- Dale & Phyllis Cavazos in memory of Chad - newsletter
- Tina, Johnathan & Heather Loper in memory of Christopher - TCF Phone
- David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy - use of a storage building

See more love gifts on page 7.



Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: The Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, Texas 75711. Or e-mail text and photos to: info@TylerTCF.org; We reserve the right to edit for space and/or content.

Deadline for submissions is the 5th of each month. TCF Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided credit is given to the author and the original source.

Errors and Omissions: We try very hard to be sure that all of the names and dates of our children are correct. If you see an error in the newsletter, please contact TCF at 903-258-2547. We want to get it right and will correct the information for future use. Thanks very much.

Email Addresses: If we do not have your email address or it has changed, please email it to info@tylertcf.org so that we may email you announcements and updates about TCF of Tyler.

Sign up for email notifications of events and to be notified when the newsletter is posted online at: www.tylertcf.org

Announcements

Tyler TCF Meeting: The meeting in Tyler is held on the third Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m., at 1901 Ricketty Lane in Tyler. For more information, please call 903-258-2547.

Steering Committee Meeting: If you are interested in participating in our chapter by serving on the steering committee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting. Anyone who would like to become more involved in TCF and serve on the steering committee is welcome to come! For more information about our next meeting, call 903-258-2547.

News from National: Compassionate Friends National offers webinars for the public on grief related topics. Upcoming public webinars will include Death of a Child By Suicide, Pregnancy and Infant Loss, The Death of a Special Needs Child and How Can I Help When A Child Dies? Check out www.compassionatefriends.org for dates and times.

Quilt Update: All squares have now been filled for our final quilt and it's being worked on by MsMary's Quilts.

Special thanks to Suzy Q's Flower Patch in Brownsboro, TX, for donating the roses for the Candlelighting in December.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY!

Dear TCF Members,

NEW! We are looking for a new meeting place. Needs to have a small storage area and a large enough room for at least 10–15 people. Must have a bathroom, be in Tyler and have low rent.

As always, we welcome volunteers to serve in any capacity within our group, including sending out birthday and anniversary cards each month. We would like to get two people per month, as it's getting to be a lot for one person to do.

Sincerely,
Cheri & Trisha

Our condolences to TCF Newsletter Editor, Mary Lingle (mom to Candice and Erin), on the death of her brother, Sam.

