



Monthly Group Meeting

Tuesday, March 21, 6:30 p.m.
707 W. Houston St., Tyler, Texas

Contact

Phone: (903) 258-2547
Web Site: www.TylerTCF.org
E-mail: info@TylerTCF.org
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter LeaderTina Loper
Chapter Co-Leader.....Pat Settle
Newsletter/Web SiteMary Lingle
Steering Committee: Tina Loper,
Pat Settle, Sam Smith, Sherri Tutt
Margie Newman, Mary Lingle

Jim & Karen Roach, Regional
Coordinators, (817) 244-0116

TCF National Organization
Toll Free: (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 Love Letter to My Children

You are great kids. You have always been great kids, although I haven't always been a great mom. After your brother died, I was hardly any kind of mom at all. I was so lost in my own grief, I wasn't there for you. You were bewildered, scared and hurt, but I couldn't seem to reach out to you beyond my own pain. I was like a day-old helium balloon drifting along, not sure whether my place was with you or with your brother.

I didn't drift for long. You grabbed my string and yanked me back! The yowls and shrieks still ring in my ears: "mom, all my underwear is dirty!" or "Mom, I'm starved!" or "Mom, he punched me!" Your brother was being cared for by his heavenly Father, but you needed your earthly mother. It was your need for me that saved my life.

I'm sorry that your brother's death robbed you of your childhood. While other kids fretted about what to wear or which movie to see, you wondered when the tears and sadness would ever end and if we would be a family again. If I could have shielded you from such great sorrow, I would have; but I couldn't.

Your lives were changed forever, and the future was uncertain, but you kept going. You supported and inspired me as we traveled that rocky road of grief together. You talked about your brother when no one else would say his name.

You kept his picture in your rooms and proudly pointed out to friends, "This is my brother." You used his things, but gently. You reminded me of the cute, funny things he said and did. You included him in your bedtime prayers. You still do. Some day I believe you will tell your own children about your brother. Thank you for keeping his memory alive.

Because of the tragedy you experienced, you are more mature than other kids your age. You possess strength and courage beyond your years. You are resilient; little things don't get you down. Best of all, you are kind, sensitive, and compassionate to others. I adore you. You are my life.

Pat Dyson ~ TCF, Beaumont, TX

TCF Library Hours

Mon, Tue, Thur: 10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Wed: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Fri: 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The Library is located in our meeting location, the College-Bound Solutions offices, at 707 W. Houston Street, Tyler.



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.

"When one is pretending, the entire body revolts." —Anais Nin

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 (always the third Tuesday 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.”

When I Must Leave You

by Helen Steiner Rice

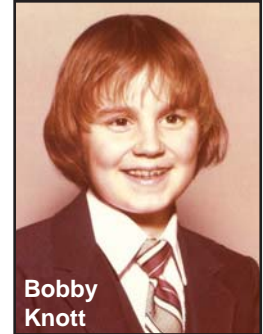
When I must leave you
For a little while—
Please do not grieve
And shed wild tears
And hug your sorrow to you
Through the years,

But start out bravely
With a gallant smile;
And for my sake
And for my name
Live on and do
All things the same,

Feed not your loneliness
On empty days,
But fill each waking hour
In useful ways,

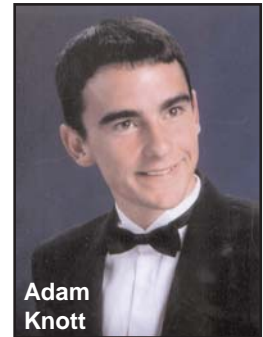
Reach out your hand
In comfort and in cheer
And I in turn will comfort you
And hold you near;

And never, never
Be afraid to die
For I am waiting for you in the sky!



**Bobby
Knott**

Poem submitted by
Bobby & Virginia Knott in
memory of Bobby & Adam



**Adam
Knott**

My Child Died Today

I double over from the pain in my midsection and heart. I sob. I cannot breathe. I count the minutes since my child was alive. Shock freezes my body, paralyzes my mind and permeates my soul. My sense of reality is now the deepest fog. I know I will not survive this. I am ready to die. I think I am dreaming, and I will wake up. My child will be here. But I am awake. My child is dead. My child has died. A primal scream begins deep within me and rushes upward, piercing the early morning air. I know I will perish, and I look forward to a quick end. Can I live without my child? Do I want to live?

My mantra becomes breathe deeply, hold and exhale. This is my only reality. I feel that I am fading into the fog. I force myself to drink water. I cannot eat. My mind wanders and then returns to this place; I am physically jolted into my body each time I grasp the finality of my child's death. The people around me are a blur. I aimlessly pace the floor. I cannot remain still. Anxiety has conquered my mind. I cannot think, talk, communicate, understand or comprehend. What are they saying? Why do I care? Where is my child? I want to be with my child. I must be with my child. Somebody medicates me. I fall into dreamless and fitful sleep, sliding, sinking, falling.

*Annette Mennen Baldwin ~ TCF, Katy, TX
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
From "My Child," copyright 2005*



We need not walk alone.

"It takes a lot of grief before our days can have more good hours than bad. But it does come. Most of us can not even imagine that progress in our early grief. Eventually, we can make peace with our loss and our painful memories become warm treasures. Even though we always think of our child daily, it is with thankfulness that they were a part of our lives." —*Marie Hofmocker*



Love Gifts

Bobby & Virginia Knott in memory of Adam & Bobby Knott

Beverly Payne in memory of Kaila McKinsey Payne - memorial quilt.

Steve & Sherri Tutt in memory of Lisa Tutt - love gift and postage for the March newsletter

David & Teresa Terrell in memory of Andy Terrell - love gift, refreshments for the TCF meeting (banana nut bread, Andy's favorite) and the use of a storage building

Claudette Brown in memory of Terry Wayne Brown



Announcements

We will be holding our Third Annual Butterfly Release on May 20th, 2006, at 1:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church south campus, 2813 and Hwy. 69 W. We will be painting the large wooden butterflies at Tina's house on Saturday, March 25th. For more info and directions, please contact Tina Loper at (903) 780-7104, (903) 570-8412 or Margie Newman at (903) 561-1447. Please let us know if you would like to help this year in honor and in loving memory of your child.

Our Annual Candlelighting Ceremony will be held on Dec. 10th, 6:30 p.m. at Carpenter's Cross Baptist Church, Hwy. 344 and 155 S. Please contact Tina Loper at (903) 594-2132 or Margie Newman at (903) 561-1447 for more information. The media is invited to attend. Please let us know if you would like to help this year in honor and in loving memory of your child.

Brian and Lisa Harvey, in memory of Sarah Harvey, will host a Lasagna Dinner in Arp on April 22nd at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and all proceeds will benefit TCF of Tyler. Directions will be provided soon.

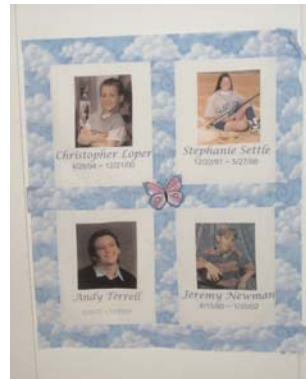
If you would like an email friend, please email Pat Settle at pdsettle@wmconnect.com, Tina Loper at butterfly6@nctv.com, or Mary Lingle at mcartwrite@aol.com.

We have a new discussion list for our group! By subscribing at www.TylerTCF.org, and clicking on Discussion List, users can connect with other TCF members.

If you would like a phone friend, please call Margie Newman at (903) 561-1447 or Mary Lingle at (903) 581-4566.

Wings Children's Grief Workshop will be held on Saturday, April 22nd from 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. for bereaved children K-12th and their families. This is a community service of Hospice of East Texas. There is no charge for participation, and lunch is provided. Children are divided developmentally into groups, and the adults/parents are in a separate session. For more information or to register, please call Laura Mattheis, Manager of Support Programs, (903) 266-3447

TCF of Tyler Memorial Quilt



If you would like to have your child's photo included on our memorial quilt, please mail a \$25 donation to P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711. For more information contact us at (903) 258-2547, or email us at info@TylerTCF.org.

The first quilt is expected to be complete in time for the Butterfly Release in May 2006.

Thanks to Teresa Terrell for donating her talent and time on this beautiful quilt which will be displayed in our meeting room and at special events.

displayed in our meeting room and at special events.



I brake for butterflies!
www.TylerTCF.org

Our bumper stickers are available for a \$2 donation. You may get them at our monthly meetings or by sending a request to: TCF of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, TX 75711.

Butterfly Ornaments

TCF of Tyler has butterfly ornaments available for \$15 plus \$3 for postage.

Send your check for \$18 to:

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



TCF of Tyler has "Forever in My Heart" wristbands.

You can get your wristbands at the monthly meetings, or send your check for \$3 to:

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





We need not walk alone.

“Regardless of the circumstances of our child’s death, for most of us, anger and guilt are a part of our grieving. We may not always be able to label these emotions or to acknowledge them, but they are there and we must deal with them. Failure to do so often results in our experiencing worse physical and emotional problems later on.” —*Bill Ermatinger*

March Birthdays



Roozbeh Arianpour
3-25-80 ~ 6-6-03
Son of Farideh Arianpour



Lisa Tutt
3-20-87 ~ 7-30-04
Daughter of Steve & Sherri Tutt



Jill Rozell
3-14-84 ~ 8-2-02
Daughter of Peggy Rozell



Toni Wood
3-10-79 ~ 9-29-03
Daughter of Tami Wooldridge



Michael Schmidt
3-11-83 ~ 2-10-03
Son of Patricia Jeffery



Jodi Lynn Attaway
3-8-72 ~ 6-5-94
Daughter of Cindi Attaway-Gill



Charles Bryan Meadows
3-18-80 ~ 1-19-03
Son of Charles & Lynda Meadows



Kenny Ivy
3-10-65 ~ 5-12-85
Son of Jo Anne Ivy



Cindy Murray
3-26 ~ 8-19-05
Daughter of Cathy Key



Timothy Andrew Lever
3-23-69 ~ 6-3-04
Son of Elsie Ford



Amanda Kay Stone
3-25-85 ~ 9-7-03
Daughter of Mary Kay & Glenn Stone



Kathy Jo Tumminello
3-19-59 ~ 7-20-04
Sister of Susie Gorman

March Anniversaries



Adam Knott
12-20-79 ~ 3-20-03
Son of Virginia & Bobby Knott



Neil Defenbaugh
10-20-81 ~ 3-27-04
Son of James & Dina Defenbaugh



Allen Price
4-11-77 ~ 3-29-04
Son of Deborah & Floyd Holcomb



Robert McMahon
7-18-72 ~ 3-6-92
Son of Dana Wright



Gary Dean Arnold
9-17-57 ~ 3-7-04
Son of Betty & Harold Arnold



Kayla Smith
11-7-89 ~ 3-5-04
Daughter of Debbie Smith



Phillip Kuhn
12-28-73 ~ 3-27-03
Son of Carolyn R. Kuhn



Joshua Andrews
6-21-88 ~ 3-14-04
Son of Tawna Andrews



Douglas Johnson
9-24-97 ~ 3-18-05
Son of Shelly Johnson



Trey LePelley
6-10-82 ~ 3-13-05
Son of Julie LePelley

Thank you for your generous donations to TCF of Tyler. These ‘love gifts’ allow us to provide our local chapter with special events, the TCF Newsletter, our Web site and more!



We need not walk alone.

“There is no sense in the loss of a child, no matter how old or young, no matter the circumstances of that death. But in the ashes of their loss, we can build a new life. Sadder, emptier perhaps, but that new life is a tribute to the ones we miss so much.” —*Lisa Sculley*

Things To Do When Desperate

1. Breathe.
2. Get my teddy bear.
3. Call other bereaved people (keep their phone numbers easily available)
4. Call close friends (keep their phone numbers easily available, too.)
5. Call a counselor.
6. Call a hot-line.
7. Get in my rocking chair. Get in any chair and let it support me.
8. Take a hot bath.
9. Run around the block three times.
10. Listen to soothing music.
11. Put on a relaxation tape.
12. Ask someone to hold me.
13. Cry.
14. Yell into my pillow
15. Join a support group.
16. Say to myself, “Others love me,” or, “I have the right to survive,” or, “Others have gotten through this, I can too.”
17. Stroke the dog or cat.
18. Watch an old movie on TV or read a book.
19. Hug a tree.
20. Stand or lie on the floor and feel the floor support me.
21. Pray
22. Start again at the top.

Edited by Anne Pieper, from “The Courage to Heal,” by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis

New ways to donate to TCF of Tyler in honor and loving memory of your child:

- \$25 for a quilt square (More info on page 3)
- \$25 to sponsor one year with the Bullard Chamber of Commerce
- \$25 to sponsor one year with the Tyler Chamber of Commerce
- \$20 to sponsor one month of advertising on Northland Cable
- \$150 for artwork for a billboard
- Postage for mailing the newsletter one month
- Refreshments for monthly meeting
- Paper, print cartridges, etc.
- Library books
- Articles or poems for the newsletter
- Monthly phone bill - \$45
- P.O. Box rental - \$26 annual

Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to:

TCF Tyler • 5401 Hollytree Drive, 1204 • Tyler, Texas 75703
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 3rd Tuesday 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: Please notify us if any of your information is incorrect.

Wish You Were Here

By Steve Tutt ~ TCF, Tyler, TX



Lisa Tutt

You'd be nineteen if you were here
But why you're gone still isn't clear.
Your things are still all in your room
As if you'd be returning soon.
Spongebob waits there by the door.
Your shoes are still there on the floor.

Your friends are all young women now.
They're working jobs or college bound.
Sometimes we see them and they say
We miss her so, wish she had stayed.

Your boyfriend's in the Army too
And by the way, he still loves you.
You thought his love was not so true
And that some other girl he'd choose.
But near two years have passed on by
Still to your grave he goes to cry.

Your niece and nephews miss you too,
And talk of the things you used to do.
Your Mother's going to be alright
And doesn't cry so much at night.
She puts the flowers on your grave,
And scrapbook pictures tries to save.

And me, I'm still the same old Dad,
The same old routine like I had.
I work real hard to make a way
To pay some bills and pass the day.

I'm not as funny as before
My world's not happy anymore.
I don't let on the pain I feel
But deep inside the hurt is real.

Time passes by year after year,
Life goes on with seldom a tear.
One wish I have, a wish so clear
My wish most of all, I wish you were here.

~Dad





We need not walk alone.

"I no longer believed that all grief was the same—that is to say, that all deaths yielded the same reaction in the grieving process. Some may disagree, but as far as I am concerned, the greatest loss any human can sustain is the death of a child." —Rev. Greg Hubbard

"Getting on With Life" — What Does It Mean?

Of all the statements and spiritual platitudes quoted at me since my son Daniel's death, the phrase that I hear most frequently makes me squirm the most. "You have got to get on with your life." Recently I quit squirming long enough to ponder the meaning behind this phrase that is usually said to the bereaved in the form of a command. Exactly what does this phrase mean? What are people implying when they say it?

I was pregnant when Daniel died, and three months later I gave birth to a baby girl. Wasn't that getting on with life? I nurtured my three children, took them to school, the park and birthday parties. Now wasn't that going on with life? I even cooked dinner at least four times a week!

At first after Daniel's death, I would have liked to literally stop my life and be buried next to my son, but I kept existing. Like a plastic bag tossed about by the wind, I was fluttering, being carried by the events of life. Seasons came and went. In the spring, I planted marigolds and tomato vines. In the autumn, I jumped in fallen leaves with my children. I continued; I am still continuing to live.

Now I may be bereaved, but I am by no means a fool. As I ponder the meaning behind "getting on with life," I know exactly what those who say this have in mind. "Forget your dead child. Quit grieving. You make me uncomfortable!" Getting on with life means don't acknowledge August 25, Daniel's birthday, anymore. Forget how he slid down the snowy bank in the recycle bin, sang in the van and ate Gummy Bears. Forget he had cancer, suffered and died at only age four. Don't see the empty chair at the dinner table, don't cry, just live!

Some who are more "religious" would like to believe that a bereaved parent can claim, "My child is safe and happy in heaven. Therefore, why should I yearn for him?" Perhaps I pose a threat to certain types because I have let it be known I question God. I weep. I have been angry. I miss my Daniel. Maybe old friends feel if they hang around me too long I might convince them that a few of their illusions about life are just that, illusions. As my cries of anguish are heard, there are those who can only think how to make me be quiet. To stop my heartfelt yearnings, they say quite sternly, "You must get on with your life."

I am living. I do move on with life with Daniel in my mind and in my heart, although he is not physically here as I continue to live and to love. To sever his memory totally from my life would cause destruction and damage that would ruin me. To push Daniel out of my life and not be able to freely mention his name or write and speak about who he was on earth would only bring more pain to my life. I'd shrivel up. Comfort for me comes in remembering with smiles how he drew with a blue marker on his sister's wall, ran outside naked and picked green tomatoes. For the reality is, getting on with life means continuing to cherish Daniel.

Alice J. Wisler, *Bereavement Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 2000, Colorado, grief@bereavementmag.com

Being Public Takes Its Toll

"When one is pretending, the entire body revolts." —Anais Nin

As we attempt to return to our jobs or our social life, or just to leave the house to do errands, we may feel that we must hold our heads up and keep acting brave. So we talk about things that don't interest us instead of talking about what plagues our heart and mind. We reluctantly agree to do things in which we do not have the slightest bit of interest.

All of this takes a tremendous amount of energy. But it does something else, too. Our bodies are under a great deal of stress as we work through our child's death. Trying to create and maintain an artificial front contributes to that stress. And stress, of course, manifests itself in many ways throughout the body -in headaches, rashes, insomnia, digestive disturbances, the inability to concentrate, and the impulse to fidget or be on the move. We may also have more colds and flus as well as unexplained pains in various parts of our bodies.

One of the kindest things we can do for ourselves is to behave, as much as is possible and reasonable, in accordance with our deepest needs and desires. We can greatly reduce the amount of time and effort we put into doing what only seems socially required.

I will not push myself into false situations or require myself to perform in a way that differs significantly from my truest self. I will take care of myself by not forcing certain actions or responses, regardless of the pressure put on me to do so. My self, my body comes first, and I need to remember that my body will revolt against pretending.

By Carol Staudacher, from "A Time to Grieve"

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: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Please check any of following that apply.

Please continue sending the newsletter.

No thank you, I'd prefer to stop receiving the newsletter.

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 _____

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



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711



We need not walk alone.



www.TylerTCF.org