



The Compassionate Friends



El Paso Chapter



December



January



February



Welcome to our Winter Meetings

Date: Wednesdays
January 25, 2012
February 29, 2012

Time: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Place:
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
1000 Montana Avenue
El Paso, Texas

Board Of Directors:

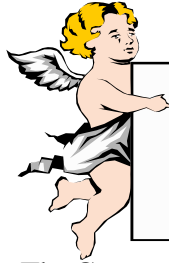
Chairman and Meeting Facilitator:
Robert Gallardo

Secretary and Treasurer:
Lou Cain

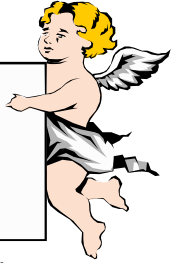
Newsletter, Website, Copies &
Mailing: The Winkelmans

Mark Your Calendar For the Spring Meetings

March 28: Regular Meeting
April 25: Regular Meeting
May 30: Regular Meeting



Editor's Notes



The Compassionate Friends, Inc. is a mutual assistance, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved families. 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 and about their feelings as they go 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, as it is to focus on being a bereaved parent, along with the feelings and issues that evolve around the death experience of a child.

To Our New Members

Coming to the first meeting is the hardest, but you have nothing to lose and everything to gain! Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not The Compassionate Friends will work for you. At the next meeting you may find just the right person or just the right words said that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Members Who are Further Down the 'Grief Road'

We need your encouragement and your support. Each meeting we have new parents. THINK BACK – what would it have been like for you at your first meeting if there had not been any TCF “veterans” to welcome you, share your grief, encourage you and tell you, “your pain will not always be this bad, it really does get better!”

YOU NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Mail all Entries to: Eric Winkelman
ejwinkel@sbcglobal.net

National Office: TCF National Office
PO Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
(630) 990-0010 or (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

Visit Our Website at: www.elpasotcf.org

"Getting Stuck -- and Unstuck"



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Wednesday, January 18, 2012

8:00 PM - 9:00 PM EST

7:00 P.M. - 8:00 PM CST

6:00 P.M. - 7:00 PM MST

5:00 P.M. - 6:00 PM PST

REGISTER NOW



Join us for a Webinar on January 18

Bereaved parents often talk about feeling "stuck" in grief. "Stuck," however can mean different things to different people -- particularly at different times in the grief journey. Please join our presenter, Vicki Scalzitti, as she explores and defines how we know when we've hit a grief hurdle and consider strategies to get moving again. With a new year (may) come new hope!

System Requirements

PC-based attendees

Required: Windows® 7, Vista, XP or 2003 Server

You can listen to the webinar through your computer speakers

Macintosh®-based attendees

Required: Mac OS® X 10.5 or newer

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/110994226>

To register, please visit: <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/110994226>

The Child That's Not There

By Tricia Palmer, TCF, Tidewater, VA In memory of my son, Gabriel Boyer

The child that's not there
Takes up every piece of me
The child that's not there
Consumes my every thought
The child that's not there
Makes me feel like I failed
The child that's not there

Took away a main reason for being
But The children that are there
Still somehow bring me joy
The children that are there
Still need my love
The children that are there
Don't need any more grief
The children that are there
Force me to go on.

Walking the Lonesome Valley

By Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF Katy, TX In memory of my son, Todd Mennen

One of my favorite gospel songs is “You’ve Got to Walk That Lonesome Valley” which is attributed to various composers in the early 20th Century. Many adaptations have been made to the words, yet all seem to fit.

This gospel song is particularly poignant for bereaved parents. We must take our grief journey alone. We must take our grief journey on our own terms and in our own way. I found myself humming and then singing this gospel song after my son died over nine years ago.

I was never really alone in this lonesome valley, however; many are taking this same walk, in their own ways and on their own terms. In TCF, we learn from other parents who walk the lonesome valley. We receive hope from those who take this journey with us. Some bereaved parents choose to return to the darkest places in the lonesome valley and help our newly bereaved parents as they define their own personal journey. Gradually, after thousands of steps, the bereaved parent comes to the place of resolution and emerges from the valley into the gauzy sunlight of hope and peace.

Reach out for assuring words and thoughts and ideas and hope. Take comfort in knowing that each of us is walking the lonesome valley.

You’ve got to walk that lonesome valley
You’ve got to walk it by yourself
There’s no one here can walk it for you
You’ve got to walk it by yourself
I must walk this lonesome valley,
I have to walk it by myself,
Oh, nobody else can walk it for me,
I have to walk it by myself.
I must go and stand my trial,
I have to stand it by myself,
O, nobody else can stand it for me,
I have to stand it by myself.

When is it my turn to cry? I’m not sure society or my upbringing will allow me a time to really cry, unafraid of the reaction and repercussion that might follow. I must be strong, I must support my wife because I am a man. I must be the cornerstone of our family because society says so, my family says so, and, until I can reverse my learned nature, I say so. - A FATHER, IN DEFRAIN ET AL. 1991, 112

THE NEW YEAR

HAPPY NEW YEAR! “How can it ever be again?” “How will I ever make it through a year of this torment?” When you are hurting and so terribly depressed it’s hard to see any good in the new year, but you must try.

First, hold tightly to the idea that you won’t always be this miserable; you will someday feel good again. This is almost impossible to believe, but even if you don’t believe it, tell yourself repeatedly that it is true--because it is. People whose love has died some years in the past will attest to this. Also, no one can suffer indefinitely as you are suffering right now.

Secondly, face the new year knowing that it offers a choice as to whether you will be on your way to healing at this time next year, or still in the pit of grief. If you choose to be on your way to healing, you must work to achieve it. That entails going THROUGH grief; crying, being angry, talking out guilts and doing whatever is necessary to move towards healing.

Thirdly, look for good in your life and find reasons to go on, accepting the fact that continued suffering will not bring your loved one back. Most of you have other family members for whom you must go on. Most importantly, you have your own life that must be lived. You know that your love would want you to go on.

No, the new year may not be a happy one, but it can be a constructive one. Through your grief you can grow and become more understanding, loving, compassionate and aware of the real values in life. Don’t waste this new year.

Margaret H. Gerner, MSW

The best tribute you can make to a loved one is the life you live after the death.

TCF National Organization is on Facebook and Twitter



Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by:

- Clicking the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org.
- Log into Facebook and search for *The Compassionate Friends/USA*.
- Visiting www.facebook.com/TCFUSA

"We want this to be both an informative and supportive place for those of us who are mourning the death of a child, sibling, or grandchild," says TCF's Executive Director Patricia Loder. "All are welcome to leave messages and talk about the child and their grief. As in our meetings, we especially appreciate shared insights about anything that has brought you comfort, hope, or some measure of peace."

Our Facebook page provides a forum for free and open conversation. While messages are reviewed, they will not be screened before they are posted. So we are asking members to be gentle and respectful of one another and to use common sense in their posts – no offensive language, no overt selling of products or services and no religious proselytizing. TCF is now also on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/#!/tcfofusa>). Please keep in mind that all opinions expressed are those of the individual poster and do not necessarily reflect those of The Compassionate Friends, Inc. or its sponsors. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook and Twitter pages will have information about upcoming events such as conferences, the Walk to Remember, and the Worldwide Candle Lighting. Please visit often and contribute to the conversations.

These social media initiatives are important to TCF because they will help increase public awareness about our organization and better enable us to fulfill our mission to help bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents.

TCF Atlanta: The Compassionate Friends of Atlanta is also on Facebook.

We invite you to join. For more information, visit the following links:

- www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=43057397614
- www.facebook.com/TCFAtlantaSiblings

You will need to log into Facebook to join the group. You will also need a Facebook account (it's free).

Our hope is that you will be able to connect to someone to help you in your grief journey. Remember "*We Need Not Walk Alone*."

Sign Up for The Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter

The Compassionate Friends National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its 630 chapters.

Published once a month (as well as occasional special editions), the e-newsletter includes information on such things as TCF National Conferences, the Walk to Remember, the Worldwide Candle Lighting, regional conferences, and other events of importance.

Each e-newsletter also includes a story specially selected from a past edition of "*We Need Not Walk Alone*," the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. For the siblings, the e-newsletter features a past question and answer column by Dr. Mary Paulson.

All you have to do to receive The Compassionate Friends e-newsletter is sign up for it online by visiting The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org and clicking on e-newsletter at the top of the Home page.

Siblings Walking Together

When a child dies, siblings are often referred to as “the forgotten mourners.” The Compassionate Friends of Atlanta Siblings Group provides support to teens and adults after the death of a sibling.

Washing the Family Car

*By Adele Rosales, TCF Ventura,
CA In memory of my sister, Anita*

As the water began to bead
Across the hard black surface,
My mind slipped into a memory.
Back to a time when a smile
Could fix the pain And mortality was not
questioned.
You and I played during the dreary Task of
washing the family car.
Rinsing turned into a water fight.
Soapy sponges became weapons,
And upside down buckets served
As our fortress.
This dull chore became an adventure,
A game shared only by you and I.
Drenched, the giggles slowly subsided
And we turned to complete the more
Serious side of our labor.
We began to dry off the car.
As the memory faded, so did my smile.
With forlorn my mind came back to the present.
I had my own serious task to complete
So I picked up a towel to dry off your headstone.

Do I Have To?

*By Jackie Rosen TCF N.Dade/S. Broward,
FL*

Mom, do I have to stop loving my brother
because he is not here?
Will I forget all about him because he’s not
near?
I remember all the things we did together,
even though we were very young.
I laugh and feel warm each time I think of a
particularly funny one.
Sometimes I get so angry that he’s no longer
here to share,
But I know he knows it’s only because of
how much I still care.
I miss him, so even though at times we
didn’t agree,
Just knowing he was there made things feel
safe for me. He always felt he had to be my
strong, protective big brother,
And that’s a bond we’ll always share forever
with each other.
He tried to protect me even when he, too,
was just scared. No, I won’t stop loving that
big brother of mine,
Not now, not ever, not till the end of time.
He will always be a part of what makes me
be me. And that’s the part of our love that
will live eternally.

The New Year

By Mary S. Cleckley, BP/USA

The new year offers opportunities for:

Progress
Reinvestment
Understanding
Forgiveness
Growth, and
All things positive.

Be kind to yourself and pick one.
Better still, choose all of the above

Our Children Remembered

LIKE LEAVES IN AUTUMN



HERE AND THEN GONE

BUT ALWAYS REMEMBERED

Date:	Child	Age:	Parents
12/1/06	Elisabeth	45	Daughter of Fred and Angelica Wagner
12/4/09	Scott Robert	39	Brother of Katy Raney
12/6/08	Mario Santana	28	Son of Sandra Pollard
12/13/93	Victor, Joey & Eric	16, 14, 10	Sons of Victor and Suzie Porras
12/21/08	Arturo	36	Son of Oscar & Rosina Aguiar
12/27/09	Brian Kelly Phillips	35	Son of Mary Swendiman
1/3/07	John Michael	12	Son of Kevin Lockett
1/13/09	Samual	20 Wks	Son of Matthew and Maria Silver
1/14/91	Richard	19	Son of Josie Sanchez
1/14/98	Carly Raquel	18	Daughter of Carlos and Rachel Martinez
1/21/00	Eric Lozano	20	Son of Oscar and Rosa Miranda
2/2/03	Joshua Chavez	1 Mo.	Son of Amanda and Marc Ovalle
2/7/07	Gilbert	33	Son of Rosa Minajes
2/9/80	Greg	20	Son of Sidney and Bobbi Cohen
2/11/10	Jennifer Lewis	35	Daughter of Jack and Judy Hart
2/11/05	Dametri	23 Mo.	Son of Charmine Jackson
2/12/05	Elijah	2	Son of Charmine Jackson
2/13/05	James Celaya	26	Son of Rod and Rosie Raulston
2/13/07	Gage	4	Daughter of Deborah Pankow
2/15/95	Michael	17	Son of Eddie and Laurie Knipp
2/17/91	Evan	14 Mo.	Son of Al and Eva Dominguez
2/17/80	Rebecca	22	Daughter of Carlos and Delphina Hernandez
2/19/95	C. J.	20	Son of Mary Jane De Cutler
2/21/00	Anthony J.	16	Son of Mike and Eva Lee
2/25/98	Joseph	5	Son of Irene and Oscar Duran

*"The passage of time alone does not cause our grief to end,
but its softening touch helps us to survive."*

~ Wayne Loder

Love Gifts

A **LOVE GIFT** is a gift of money or service to The Compassionate Friends. It is usually in honor of a child who has died but it can also be a gift to help in the work of the El Paso Chapter of TCF. Your gifts are tax deductible and are our Chapter's only monetary support. Your donation will help us pay for postage and labels for sending our newsletter each month.

LOVE GIFT

Name of Person to be Remembered _____

Special Occasion of Person _____

Given By _____

Send To: Mary Lou Cain
5664 Beth View
El Paso, TX 79932

Love Gifts For Winter

Bobbi & Sid Cohen in Loving Memory of Greg Wayne Cohen's Birthday, December 7, 1959.
Gustavo & Bethany, Betty & Hailey Olivas in Loving Memory of Mark Adrian Arredondo.
Sandra Betancourt, Edith Yanez & Rosie Estrada in Loving Memory of Adrian Betancourt.
Everett & Susana Lewis in Loving Memory of Enrique Lewis. "Thank You for Your Support."
Alvin & Carmen Dobard in Loving Memory of Jeremy Dobard.
Felicitas Arellano in Loving Memory of Jessica Maria Pando.
Maria-Elena Pando in Loving Memory of Jessica Maria Pando.
Laurie and Eddie Knipp in Loving Memory of Michael Knipp. "We Love and Miss You Son."

Fathers - The Forgotten Grievors

The death of a child is probably the most traumatic and devastating experience a couple can face. Although both mothers and fathers grieve deeply when such a tragedy occurs, they grieve differently, and it is most important that each partner give the other permission to grieve as he/she needs. This may be the greatest gift each can give the other.

Parental grief is strongly influenced by the nature of the bond between child and parent. Bereavement specialists actually speak of "incongruent grieving" patterns in mothers and fathers and of differences in the timing and intensity of the parental bond for mothers and fathers.

For the mother, the bond is usually more immediate and demonstrable, more intense at the beginning of life, more emotionally and physically intimate. The mother's bond with the baby is usually tightly forged from the moment of conception and continues through the pregnancy, the birth, and the nursing process. The maternal bond involves the present and the baby's immediate needs, while the father's bond with the baby more often concerns the future and dreams and expectations for the child. Today, however, many fathers are forging earlier and more intense prenatal bonds with their babies. Fathers also are often present in the delivery room for the birth. Some fathers become direct caregivers of the newborn, developing early and close bonds with their infants. Yet, still in many cases, "the father's emotional investment in parenting tends to occur later and less intensely than the mother's. This has implications for the way parents grieve" (Cordell and Thomas 1990, 75).

Finding My Heart Again

Seems just yesterday I saw your face
Heard your voice
Now I dig out letters
You wrote me in your yesterdays
And I have to look forward
With hope that your yesterdays' offerings of love
Will help Momma's heart yet continue to wait
Until we see each other again upon Heaven's golden shores.
You wrote many in the family
Each lily I picked from your heart
So freshly laid, you searched for hope, for love
Your eyes soft brown round
Your heart a pearl
Your life a price
You have touched me today
Even here on the floor in the box where I found you
Your words heal and hold me
You embrace me from your heart in heaven
You look down upon me and say I love you Mamma
Who's to say words can't heal or stitch up needed wounds
Or like a root in the heart can't stretch toward a love-starved sky
Marjorie you reach out your heart yet still
I'm often amazed at your kindness
You, a part of me, were packed away

Yet through the pain I see I have found healing
In what of you I had packed away
Your letters resurfacing skin of my eyes
I find your smile wide peeking out of cardboard
into my soul.
Your life did play a role
The Lord knows your Mamma's heart
Her heart's vision for family restoration
Her heart's longing to see her family fully recover safe
Under God's unity umbrella
Thank you Marjorie Mae
You've touched me in many graceful ways
You have watered my heart's garden
And I'm sheltered by a Father
Who knows what I'm feeling
He rains down showers of your love upon me
I taste the honeydew of my Father's love
As I am kissed by a friend, my daughter up above
I am a friend of God He knows my name
Created me and all that I am
Made me to realize – made me to know
Significantly in a box.
His love kiss did blow.....upon
Here upon my Momma's Heart.



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