



APRIL—MAY—JUNE 2025



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

"A Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families Who Have Experienced the Death of a Child"
Portland, Oregon ~ (503) 307-8450 ~ www.portlandtcf.org



ANNUAL POTLUCK PICNIC

Save the date! **WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2025**

We will meet at Laurelhurst Park at the same place as last year,
under the trees for shade.

Watch for final details in the July newsletter & our website (portlandtcf.org).

We hope you join us!

Spring is for the Birds

I sat at the kitchen table, looking out at the dazzling spring day. It was the kind of breathtakingly beautiful day that brings a lump to your throat and a song to your lips. Spring was my favorite time of the year, but I couldn't have been more miserable. Only five months before, the joy had fled from my life when my precious son Blake died.

All at once, a ridiculous verse from my childhood popped into my head:

*"Spring is sprung, the grass is riz;
I wonder where the flowers is"*

Like the poet, I wondered where the flowers were—oh, they were

here all right, but not for me. It seemed that the whole world had burst into bloom around me, but grief-stricken as I was, the glory of the awakening earth only brought me pain. I studiously ignored the startling greenness of the trees. I averted my eyes from the bushes laden with bright azalea blooms. I considered each new bug, each tiny sprout, a personal affront. Where was my renewal? Where was my hope? How could I celebrate spring while winter still raged in my heart?

I continued to gaze out the window, knowing that I had plenty

to do but not having the energy to move. Suddenly a saucy, fat robin hopped onto the deck. "Just what I need," I thought bitterly. "Another sign of spring." At last I was motivated to drag myself over to the sink and tackle the mountain of dirty dishes.

The bird was back the next day. "Shoo," I growled through the glass. "Go back where you came from!" Ignoring me, he hopped cheerfully across the yard, stopping to peck the earth in search of an especially delectable bug. He was so perky, it made me sick.

(Continued on page 12.)

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

First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson, Rm. #134, Portland, OR 97205

FOR MORE INFORMATION: (503) 307-8450

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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

UNTIL HEAVEN—A TRIBUTE TO FAMILIES GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A CHILD

by Sarah Bertola

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2ETsUgEEHc>

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

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



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 contact Ellen White (503) 502-7767

EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER #2571

Willamette Christian Center
2500 W. 18th Ave. Eugene, OR 97402

*Contact Chapter co-facilitators Rachael at 541-221-5792
or Ben at 541-704-5938 or eugspfdtcf@gmail.com
for meeting dates & times

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

~ CALENDAR ~

April 5—Portland TCF meeting, 10:30 a.m.
April 20—Easter
April 22—Earth Day
May 3—Portland TCF meeting, 10:30 a.m.
May 5—Cinco de Mayo
May 11—Mother's Day
May 26—Memorial Day
June 7—Portland TCF meeting 10:30 a.m.
June 15—Father's Day
June 19—Juneteenth
June 20—Summer solstice



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 e-mag at
www.compassionatefriends.org



Please support Portland TCF!

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.



TCF's 48th National Conference

July 11—13, 2025 in Bellevue, Washington

We are very pleased to announce registration is now open for TCF's 48th Annual National Conference in Bellevue, WA! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief. Participants create friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heart-breaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed & rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Register online at compassionatefriends.org

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

~ Washington Irving

TCF ANNUAL RETREAT, SEABECK, WASHINGTON

13395 Lagoon Drive, NW, Seabeck, WA 98380

At the scenic & historic Seabeck Conference Center on Hood Canal.

May 30—June 1, 2025

For four decades, bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings have gathered on the shores of Hood Canal at the Seabeck Conference Center. This retreat offers a space to grieve, heal, and connect with others on similar journeys. Throughout the weekend, you'll have opportunities to attend workshops, listen to insightful speakers, and participate in sharing groups. The pace is relaxed—take time to explore forest trails, paddle in the lagoon, or find a quiet moment of reflection.

For more details about Seabeck's history, campus, and directions, visit seabeck.org.

*For questions about registration, lodging, or financial assistance, contact Mike McLeod at 206-369-7366.



"What we have once enjoyed, we can never lose. All that we love deeply becomes part of us."

~ Helen Keller



FACEBOOK PAGE

Please join us at
"TCF PORTLAND"



This a private Facebook group for the Portland members only.

♥ Since this is a private page, you will be asked a couple questions from the administrators when you request to join.

Administrators - Debra Moon, Bev Waterworth



Please visit our newly designed website. It is very easy to use & find information you are seeking. Thank you Diane for your hard work to make this possible!

portlandtcf.org

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Grief isn't about fighting; it's about surviving. It's about sifting through the rubble of your world, trying to rebuild something from the wreckage. The truth is, you don't ever "move on".

You just learn to live amongst the ruins.

~ Jameson Arasi



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 rent, brochures, outreach, special events, etc.

Please complete the form on the back page with your love note & submit with your favorite photo. To include a picture with your Love Gift, please email your special photo to debsmoon@gmail.com

DEADLINE to submit for the next newsletter is JUNE 10, 2025

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

**YOU ARE THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL MEMORY
I KEEP LOCKED INSIDE
MY HEART.**

~ Narin Grewal

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OF OUR LAND
L
D
I
E
R
S



A red, white and blue reminder ...
Soldiers who train and toil
Proud, strong and courageous
Lives lost on foreign soil.

Here at home hearts are broken
Never again will be the same
Sons & daughters forever gone
Medals in their name.

An empty seat at holidays
Phone calls never made
Families left with gaping holes
Watching ceremonies & parades.

Honor & pray for these families
Who continue to pay the toll &
must be strong & courageous
With a heart not fully whole.

A red, white and blue reminder ..
Your country will never forget
We'll always value your valor
And honor your untimely death.

~ Diana Barta
TCF, Portland OR

Memorial Day

The Song Ends, the Melody Lingers

Surviving the initial and crushing onslaught of tragedy and loss is step one. I once thought that would be the hardest. I recall with such clarity thinking "if I can just get past these firsts.....". Well, here I am, years later, and it doesn't end. It lingers. It takes on a new life and if we're not careful it can become our life. That actually fueled my grief work, my path, the fight not to be defined by it. I am without a doubt a bereaved mom, but am also more. It is work to find purpose, and work to let your heart once again be filled. I am enriched by the sum of my experiences, even the most devastatingly painful ones. Perhaps especially by the most painful ones. While I can not say "I'm glad this happened", nor will I ever, (like you I long for my child back) I can do my best to utilize my deepened capacity to feel, and care for those who cross my path. Many hurt. All suffer, in one way or another. One of the most beautiful displays of love is seen post tragedy (hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, floods) when victims themselves rise up, bleeding and wounded, and begin tending to others. When the time comes, may we possess such a heart. And then the Melody will play on.

~ Michelle Thomason, mother of Michael, TCF, Portland Oregon



*I want to write your name on napkins in
coffee shops you'll never visit
I want to paint your name across the canvas
of all the art you'll never see
I want to shout your name from every balcony &
mountain & rooftop I ever stand on again
I want to say your name to every stranger
that I meet & fit it into all the conversations
that you'll never get to have
I want to say your name over & over & over & over
until it's burned into every atom in the universe
while there's life in my body
I will never stop saying your name*

~ Anonymous

*"Sanctuary, on a personal level is where we perform
the job of taking care of our soul."*

~ Christopher Forrest McDowell

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.



STEPPING STONES

Come, take my hand, the road is long.
We must travel by stepping stones.
No, you're not alone. I've been there.
Don't fear the darkness. I'll be with you.
We must take one step at a time.
But remember, we may have to stop awhile.
It's a long way to the other side
And there are many obstacles.

We have many stones to cross.
Some are bigger than others.
Shock, denial, and anger to start.
Then comes guilt, despair and loneliness.
It's a hard road to travel, but it must be done.
It's the only way to reach the other side.

Come, slip your hand in mine.
What? Oh, yes, it's strong.
I've held so many hands like yours.
Yes, mine was once small and weak like yours.
Once, you see, I had to take someone's hand
In order to take the first step.
Oops! You've stumbled. Go ahead and cry.
Don't be ashamed. I understand.
Let's wait here awhile so that you can
get your breath.
When you're stronger, we'll go on,
one step at a time.
There's no need to hurry.

Say, it's nice to hear you laugh.
Yes, I agree, the memories you shared are good.
Look, we're halfway there now.
I can see the other side.
It looks so warm and sunny.
Oh, have you noticed?
We're nearing the last stone
and you're standing alone.
And look, your hand, you've let go of mine.
We've reached the other side.

But wait, look back, someone is standing there.
They are alone and want to cross the stepping
stones.
I'd better go. They need my help.
What? Are you sure?
Why, yes, go ahead. I'll wait.
You know the way.
You've been there.
Yes, I agree. It's your turn, my friend ...
To help someone else cross the stepping stones.

~ Barbara Williams Copyright © Barbara Williams

~ I miss you like crazy ~

Grief is like living two lives. One is where you pretend that everything is alright, and the other is where your heart silently screams in pain.

~ author unknown

STEPPING STONES TO VOLUNTEER

Your First Few TCF Meetings

- Were you surprised to meet others who were also grappling with the terrifying trauma and shock of losing a child, grandchild or sibling? Did this help you feel less isolated, more understood?
- Were you encouraged to talk about your loved one and say their name? Was there a genuine interest in your child?
- Did you notice that crying and tears are perfectly acceptable, and in fact, normal?

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

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE.

As Time Goes On

Grief has no timeline, it is different with each individual.

Talking about our child, sharing memories we hold dear, celebrating their birthday, honoring the day they died, are all helpful steps in the healing process. In time, the sharpest pain of grief softens, the sadness of loss always remains. **OUR CHILDREN ALWAYS REMEMBERED, ALWAYS LOVED.**

The Idea of Hope

Hope is a powerful and universal human experience. After the death of a child, hope for a normal life again may feel elusive. If you have reached out to welcome a new member, shared a hug of support, or just a gentle touch on the shoulder of another grieving person, you have extended **HOPE**. These small gestures help not only the deeply bereaved, but also help strengthen and heal yourself.

The Portland TCF Chapter is always seeking volunteers; to assure we have a presence in the community for newly bereaved families now and in the future. If you feel TCF has played a positive part in your healing journey and would like to help our chapter remain strong, we urge you to take a step forward and become a volunteer!

**HELPING OTHERS ALWAYS HELPS OUR OWN HEART
GROW STRONGER.**

Questions? Please contact Jeff Littman jwlittman@comcast.net or Carolyn Harrington linerharrington@gmail.com

"Motherhood is an eternal place within your heart...a sacred place that belongs to you. Deep within the very essence of your existence, you are all mothers, whether you have living children or not—you're still mothers—beautiful & loving mothers. While you may not be able to care for your child/children on earth, that sacred place of motherhood remains within you. Remember always that the love of a mother is stronger than any other force in the universe. The love of a mother transcends death." ~ Joanne Cacciatore, TCF, Atlanta, GA

A Mother's Love

A mother's love is unique & special, nothing else can quite compare.

When you think she's given all she's got, you find she still has love to spare.

When the object of her love is taken for whatever the reason be, an important part of her goes with him, a part no one else can see.

You may understand her grief & sorrow. You may feel a great loss, too. But what that child meant to her is different from what that person meant to you.

She spent nine months with this life within her, growing & maturing day by day, truly depending on her for existence in a very real & vital way.

A bond is shared between mother & son the first moment of his birth. Unspoken, unheard, though it be, no words can measure its worth.

So though your cherished child has departed from what we know life to be, that bond will keep the love you share alive for now through all eternity.

~ Robin Hunt, Portland, Oregon

On Mother's Day with Love

If this is your first Mother's Day without your child (or your second). It will indeed be a very different one. And very painful. As the special days like Mother's Day, Father's Day, proms, graduations, and birthdays approach, we offer these thoughtful reminders which have been shared by TCF parents.

- ♥ Accept the pain. Because you loved deeply, you must also grieve deeply.
- ♥ Keep things simple by playing down the significance of holidays and special days.
- ♥ Change your routine from past years.
- ♥ Plan to be "busy" part of the day (go out to dinner or to an "up" movie, or visit friends).
- ♥ Give your kids some space. They not only feel your extreme sadness at these times, they also have their own grief feelings to deal with.

REMEMBER: Parents who have been there agree that the anticipation is worse than the day itself.

~ TCF, Aurora, IL

*Let us recognize all mothers who have lost a child.
Let us acknowledge their strength & eternal love.*

MOTHER'S DAY

It's here again: the time of year when children pay homage to their mothers. What a poignant day for bereaved parents. What used to be a joyous occasion has become another day to get through and "grin and bear it."

We, who have other living children, don't want to burden them with our feelings of depression & sadness, so we put on our happy faces & try to enjoy the day. We do enjoy parts of this annual tribute to mothers. We do get pleasure from our living children. The gifts, cards, and remembrances they heap upon us are appreciated.

But what we all, in our secret hearts and souls, yearn for is the presence of our beloved children who are no longer here to share our day. Nothing will bring them back.

The first Mother's Day that came after my children's deaths, I went to the cemetery. My sister questioned whether it would be "good" for me to go. I responded that since they couldn't come to me on this day, I would go to them. How many of us have longed to "go to them?" How many of us have missed and wanted our children, not only on Mother's Day, but also on every day...in one way or another?

I know that all the bereaved fathers feel as we mothers do. Next month in June, will come their trying time...Father's Day. My heart goes out to them.

Again, I wonder about the inequities in this drama called life. I observe some people living into their 70 and 80's never losing a child. Their Mother's Day and Father's Day must be wonderful. I envy them.

I can't end this without paying my own personal tribute to all the bereaved parents who have lost either an only child or all their loving children. I salute their courage; I cry for them, and most of all, I send a silent prayer to them and wish for their strength to continue. The parents I've met through Compassionate Friends, I consider a privilege to know.

~ Anita Weinstein, TCF, Penn Wynn, PA

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.



LEGEND HAS IT THAT
DRAGONFLIES WERE
GIVEN AN EXTRA SET OF
WINGS SO THAT ANGELS
COULD RIDE ON THEIR BACKS. WHEN YOU
SEE THIS WINGED BEAUTY, IT'S AN
EXQUISITE REMINDER THAT AN ANGEL
FROM HEAVEN IS VISITING YOU.

~ Project Forgive



Please Support Portland TCF . . .

Just by shopping at Fred Meyer with your Rewards Card!! Fred Meyer donates to local community organizations/nonprofits of your choice through their *Community Rewards Program*. 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 and Rebates, just as you do today.

Great Way for Families & Friends to Support TCF!

- Go to www.fredmeyer.com/community-rewards
- 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 **\$40.31** during the 4th quarter!

2024 YTD = \$163.30

~ Thank you for participating
& enjoy shopping! ~

(Continued from page 1)

That night, heavy rains brought a cold front, and the temperature dipped into the 40s. The next morning he was there, chipper as ever. "Dumb bird," I hissed. "Don't you know how cold it is?" The realization that I was talking to a bird made me question my sanity—once again. The robin came back the next day and the next. The following day, however, he didn't return. I was torn between feeling sad that he was gone and being embarrassed that I had been looking for him. The next day he reappeared bringing with him two cousins, an uncle, a nephew and his wife's good-for-nothing brother Earl. "Now you're gang-ing up on me!" I shouted, as memories of an old movie drifted through my addled brain.

At that moment, I experienced an unfamiliar contorting of my face. It was a smile. As a little of the heaviness lifted from my heart, I realized that though I couldn't delight in the season as I usually did, there would be other springs. Beauty and joy would some day return to my life, as surely as the first timid shoots emerge from the frozen earth. As for those pesky robins, there was just one thing left for me to do. I went to the pantry to get some bread to feed my friends.

~ Patricia Dyson, TCF, Beaumont, TX

It takes both the rain & the sunshine
to make a rainbow.



Dads, you are special and strong. Hang onto your memories of your child—treasure them and let them bring you some joy. Acknowledge your pain and loneliness for your child. Let tears fall if they well up in your eyes. You are and will always be your child's "Dad" and that makes you very special. Embrace this honor!
Be good to yourself on this Father's Day. ~ TCF, Central Oregon chapter

~ A MAN ~

When I look in the mirror I see a middle-aged man. His hair is thinning on top & beginning to turn gray on the sides. Lines & creases are starting to form at the corner of his eyes. It seems that his age may be starting to show.

When I look in the mirror at this man I see much more. I see a lonely man that is hurting & angry inside. He's trying to grieve over the loss of someone very dear and special to him. Someone taken away by death with no warning, his life taken by his own hand. It has left a big emptiness inside him.

He sometimes wears a mask to hide the tears from the pain and anguish that he feels. Sometimes he's afraid to let others know exactly how he feels, afraid of what they'll say to him, afraid of their reaction to him.

He just wishes things were different. He wishes it would all go away. He wishes he could wake up in the morning and realize it has all been a bad dream..

When he's out in public he hopes it doesn't show. He hopes the tears don't come to his eyes. He hopes his anger doesn't come out. So he tries as hard as he can to

hold back the tears. After all a real man is not supposed to cry. So he hides behind his mask. He manages to suppress his anger, he saves it for when he's alone then he finds ways to release it to keep from hurting others and to keep from lashing out at them for no reason.

So if you see me out and about and you manage to see a tear in my eye, don't criticize me, judge me, or stereotype me. Real men do cry & sometimes it is difficult not to. Don't tell me things like "enough is enough", or that "it's time to get on with your life." Don't tell me "it's been long enough that I should be over it." It just doesn't work that way. Life will never be the same again and you never get over it.

Listen to me but don't condemn me. Don't feel sorry for me, feel *with* me. Don't shy away from me, but help me carry this load. Be there for me when I need someone to talk to.

Tell me I don't need to hide behind my mask. Tell me it's ok to feel the way I feel. Tell me it's ok for me to cry. Tell me it's ok to feel the anger. Most of all tell me you'll help me through this nightmare of life.

~ Lloyd E. Carson

I ache for the Father's Day past when I was whole though I did not know it.

~ Author unknown

MEN'S GRIEF

In a world that whispers
"be strong"
He stands, a silent sentinel
against the storm.
Tears hidden like pearls
in the ocean's depths,
A heartache so profound,
it echoes in his form.

"Men don't cry," they say,
but how they weep,
In the quiet corners
where no one can see,
For the loss of a loved one
so deep, so true,
Is a wound that
bleeds invisibly.

Yet there is a courage
in his silent battle,
A strength in the vulnerability
he dares not show,
For every tear he swallows,
Every memory he cradles,
Is a testament to the love
he'll forever know.

So let's rewrite this
unwritten code,
That tells me to shroud
their grief in night
Let's shine a light on
their unspoken sorrow,
And acknowledge their pain in
the broad daylight.
For grief, like love,

knows no bounds,
It does not discriminate,
does not judge
It simply is a tide that
pulls us under,
And in understanding,
we may give it a nudge.
To the man who mourns
in the shadows,
Know this: your tears
are not a sign of defeat,
They are precious droplets
of your undying love,
And in them, your heart's
rhythm continues to beat.

~ Author unknown

It takes a strong man to be a father, and an even stronger man to be a grieving father. ~ author unknown

TCF Sibling Zoom Meetings



- ⇒ SIB Suicide Support—Meets 4th Monday of the month at 9 pm ET
- ⇒ Meeting with Jordan—Meets Tuesdays at 7 pm ET
- ⇒ Grief Book Club—Meets 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm ET
- ⇒ Write Your Soul—Meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7 pm ET

- ⇒ Meeting with Jason—Meets Thursdays at 7 pm ET
- ⇒ LGBTQ+ Sibs Meeting—Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 9:30 pm ET
- ⇒ Canada Sibling Sharing Circle—Meets 2nd Saturday of the month at 1 pm ET
- ⇒ SIBS in Relationships and Partners—Meets 2nd Sunday of the month at 7 pm ET

To sign up for TCF SIBS newsletter, or read about the groups, visit siblingisland.com or scan the QR code.

Please refer to the National Compassionate Friends website:
compassionatefriends.org

Empty Places

I drove the old way yesterday, it'd been a while, you see, and there, without a warning the pain washed over me.

I drove the old way yesterday & sadness came on strong, taken back by so much feeling, since you've been gone so long.

Places seem to lie in wait to summon up the tears, to say remember yesterday, those days when you were here.

Places where you laughed & played are places where I cry. These places hold memories that will live as long as I.

~ Genesee Gentry, TCF, Marin County, CA

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

Please visit www.compassionatefriends.org for links to the following support groups

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

FOREVER ON MY MIND

When I attended my first meeting of the Bergen Passaic Compassionate Friends, it was the day after my fifth birthday without my twin brother Alan. Up to then, I was working nights & unable to attend meetings. Nine months later at a chapter meeting someone in the circle spoke of the tenth anniversary of his or her child's death. They said they no longer think of their child everyday and it didn't bother them. This was shocking to me, not to mention upsetting. I couldn't imagine living a day without thoughts of my brother—both happy & sad.

I went home very upset. Even after five years I always thought of him each and every day. To this day, I will lick the bowl of frosting and think of times we fought over the bowl. After a snowstorm I write his initials in the snow. When I hear something funny, I think of him. But, I also think of all that he has missed. He would have gotten to know his six, soon to be seven nieces and nephews. We would have been able to enjoy many vacations together.

This June will be the ninth anniversary of his death. With the passing of time I have adjusted to not talking to him every day. I do think of what he would say when I have a problem to work out. I think that part of the old me is returning. I have started to exercise again. This is something I used to love to do before Alan got sick. I have taken steps to advance my career, something I was planning at the time of his death. I also think I took on some of his traits ... like becoming a better writer and not emptying the laundry basket after each wash. There are many more good days than bad.



But, almost nine years after Alan's death, I am probably the only adult male to cry at a children's movie. In *"Rugrats in Paris"*, Tommy's father remarries sometime after his mother's death. Tommy is thrilled that he will have two mommies, one on earth and one in heaven. I am forced to remember that I can't have another Alan.

I have given myself a job that I love—the job of keeping Alan's memory alive. I do this by putting the newsletter together, collecting license plates with his name for each state that I visit, donating to his scholarship fund, and in many other ways.

When *"Phantom of the Opera"* opened on Broadway. I had no desire to see it, that was, until it opened in Philadelphia after Alan's death. Alan was a publicist in Philly and the show was playing at the only theatre where I had not seen something Alan had publicized. One of the songs from the opera has a line ... *"There will never be a day in which I won't think of you."* I think this will be true for a long time to come.

~ Daniel Yoffee, TCF, New Jersey

I Am Your Sister and Always Will Be

"I am your sister and always will be." That's how Susie signed her cards to me. After a while, she shortened it to, I am . . . And of course I knew the rest of it. Susie was two and one-half years younger than I. She was alive one evening talking on the phone to Mom about the Oscars and to Dad about moving. The next day she was found.

Whatever it was—it ended her life and changed mine forever.

There was a wonderful side of my sister that I didn't pay enough attention to. She was a kind and loving person, always ready to shelter lost animals and lost souls. When she was in a good mood, her smiles warmed my heart. Yet I spent most of my life wishing that things were different;

wishing that she thought more of herself, wishing that she would take my advice, wishing that she were happier, wishing that we could accept each other.

Now, for two years, I've done nothing but wish she were here so we could have another chance to work on our relationship. Now, I wish that I had been able to give her my unconditional love and support (she needed it and deserved it). Now, I wish that I could have been with her that night so she would not have been alone. Now, I wish that I would have held her in my arms and told her how very much I loved her. Because, Susie, I am your sister and always will be.

~ Michele Walters, TCF, Baltimore, MD

MY BROTHER'S EYES

I search for my brother's eyes in my son & in me, I see his smile. With my offspring all around me I hold onto him for awhile. Although he died so long ago he continues to live still. In this one's laugh, & that one's hand—I always feel a thrill. My family laughs when I find the likeness, the features that remind. They say I'm making it all up & that I must be blind. But I have memorized it all & find him in little ways, his eyes, his smile & gestures are still with me today.

~ Nina Danielson, Cape Cod, MA

The Compassionate Friends
Portland Oregon Chapter
6705 SW 15th Avenue
Portland, OR 97219



APRIL—MAY—JUNE
2025



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