



JULY—AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 2026

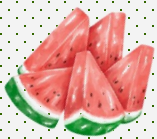


THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

“A Nonprofit Self-Help Organization for Families Who Have Experienced the Death of a Child”
6705 SW 15th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97219 ~ (503) 307-8450 ~ www.portlandtcf.org

*I lost you, but I got to love you. I got to be loved by you. And even in my grief,
I'll forever be grateful for that.*

~ Silent Tears for You, Pinterest



TGF PICNIC AT LAURELHURST PARK ~ JULY 22nd
See page 3 for more details . . .

THE BEAUTIFUL NAME OF PARENT

People often ask why there is not a word for someone who has lost a child. For me the answer is quite simple; I am and always will be a parent. The death of our child does not take that precious title away from any of us. Nothing and no one can ever change the fact that we are parents. We gave life to, nurtured and raised our children, for however long or short their lives were.

‘Parent’ is a living word. It is an eternal word. Our children would want us to

remember that we are their parents now and forever. They would want the name of ‘parent’ that was bestowed on us at their birth to live on in our hearts.

We are still actively parenting our children. We continue to bring life to our children by loving them now and forever. There is no and should never be a word to signify the endless love of a parent.

~ Janet G. Reyes, TCF, Alamo Area Chapter, TX



My child brought light into this world. I will never let that light go out.

~ Clara Hinton

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

Chapter Leader

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(503) 307-8450
linerharrington@gmail.com

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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

**Ed Sheeran—"Gone Too Soon" (lyrics)
Emotional Ballad About Losing a Loved One**

By Cage World

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4zFQRhfwSHM>

CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

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



~ CALENDAR ~

- July 4—Portland TCF in-person mtg.
- July 4—Independence Day
- July 22—Annual TCF picnic, see pg.3
- July 26—Parent's Day
- August 1—Portland TCF in-person mtg.
- Sept. 5—Portland TCF in-person mtg.
- Sept. 7—Labor Day
- Sept. 13—National Grandparent's Day
- Sept. 22—Fall equinox

Future TCF meetings:
October 3, November 7, December 5, 2026



Please visit our newly designed website: portlandtcf.org

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

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.



PORTLAND TCF PICNIC POTLUCK

Wednesday, July 22, 2026 @ 6—8 pm.

Join us for an evening of sharing & feel free to bring family & friends.

LAURELHURST PARK, 3800 SE Oak St., Portland 97214 (see map attached to email)

*We will gather at Picnic Area "F" just to the right of the green building (restrooms) at the park entrance on ANKENY ST. Ankeny St. cannot be accessed via Cesar Chavez Blvd. except from the north (I-84)

Details . . .

- ♥ TCF will provide water and paper products.
- ♥ Bring a photo of your child/grandchild/sibling (optional) to display at a special table.
- ♥ Bring a dish to pass
- ♥ Bring a lawn chair—just in case!
- ♥ Bring an umbrella—just in case!



RSVP requested but not required. Reply to portlandtcf@gmail.com

Questions? Call Carolyn (503) 307-8450



49th TCF National Conference in Baltimore, MD July 2—5, 2026

Our conference is a place for bereaved families to find community and hope, while learning and sharing with others. Lifelong friendships are often made at the conference through meeting others who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. This eagerly anticipated event will take place in Baltimore, Maryland, during the weekend of July 2-5, 2026.

More information to follow on
www.compassionatefriends.org

When all of a sudden, out of nowhere, it hits you that your child is gone and you'll never see them again. You'll never again see their smile or hear their voice or their laugh. And each time it happens, it's as if it's the first time that you're aware of it and it rocks you to your core.

~ Author unknown



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



Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL

Our children lovingly remembered...

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Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



Love Notes

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 SEPTEMBER 10, 2026.

CONFIDENTIAL

*When a parent loses a child, it is a long
and emotional process.
It starts on the day the child passes away
and only ends when the parent joins them.*

~ www.daveswordsofwisdom.com

Our children lovingly remembered...

CONFIDENTIAL



How can it be, after so many years, that grief can still present as a knotty, tangled and messy ball of yarn? It is an understatement to say grief is not linear! Different seasons of life can alter our familiar posture. The way we handle our memories, sorrow and triggers is profoundly impacted by where we are in our current "headspace". I think we all know the difficulty of managing grief increases when we find ourselves in yet another challenging circumstance. Sometimes I want to look up to the sky and yell "no more!". As if life should be so gracious! I am both shocked and yet keenly aware that times does not heal all wounds. (I'm also glad I didn't know this on the front end) Everyone processes differently, but I have learned that to walk the path of grief well is to actually do the grief work. To quiet ourselves, to introspect, to feel, to assess and to find healthy choices for our wellness. For some, find a trustworthy friend. For others, like myself, I work better alone. But I must sit with my grief when it rears it's head. Otherwise my tendency is to blow past it with busyness. That's a bit like driving my car at 80 mph with my check engine light on. It is easier, but the long term cost will not be so. Wherever you're at on this journey, know you are not alone. We are fellow sojourners together. And it is here we find comfort, compassion and support.

*Hugs,
Michelle Thomason, TCF, Portland OR*



You Know You're Making Progress When ...

- You can remember your child with a smile—
- You no longer feel you have to go to the cemetery every day or week—
- You realize the painful comments others make are made in ignorance—
- You can tolerate the sound of a baby crying—
- You can reach out to help someone else—
- You can find something to laugh about—
- You can concentrate on something besides your child—
- You can drive by the hospital or that intersection without screaming—
- You can find something to thank God for—
- You no longer feel exhausted all the time—
- You can be alone in your house without it bothering you—
- You can talk about what happened to your child without falling apart—
- You can appreciate a sunset, the smell of newly mowed grass, the pattern on a butterfly's wings—

~ Author Unknown, TCF, Carmel/Indianapolis, IN

OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS

SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

www.sbsrnw.org
Facebook—SBSRNW
(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 * Milwaukie * 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

Sometimes I think of you and my heart aches with the thought,
you've missed so much. But then I remind myself that maybe I've got
it all wrong, and you haven't missed any of it at all.
Maybe you just have a better bird's eye view these days.

~ Life Grief

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 jlittman@comcast.net or
Carolyn Harrington linerrharrington@gmail.com

What is the Most Difficult Age to “lose” a Child?

What is the Right Age for Anyone to Die?



Stillborn, a few weeks or months old?

“Perhaps. For then the parents haven’t learned to really know them yet.” I wonder—how about all the dreams, anxiety and care taken during those pregnant months, in order to assure a healthy child? The pain of delivery, yet only empty arms to show for it. The nursery, ready and waiting. What a tragic end to a dream!

One to Five Years Old?

“They were so young. Maybe the really closeness hadn’t formed yet. They weren’t ‘people’ yet.” Think again! Remember their first steps—their funny run (often with wet diapers drooping) - and their first words, then sentences—their letting you know how important you are to them. Beautiful years—gone!

Six to Twelve Years Old?

“They, at least, had some time to have fun.” Just think, though. They were on the threshold of real learning—some getting ready to enter Jr. High. Just

starting into that pre-adult world. Frightening, but exciting to them. They cannot wait to be ‘older’, more independent.

Twelve to Twenty Years Old?

Not then, certainly. They are just upon the threshold—starting to date, learning to drive, real responsibilities. Graduation—the beginning of their future. Their dreams starting to form.

Twenty to Thirty Years Old?

Goodness no! Just getting settled in a job—maybe just married, dreaming of a home and children. Life is really beginning to unfold.

Thirty to Forty Years Old?

That certainly would not be the time. Just getting their teeth into a career. College or school of hard knocks just starting to pay off. Married a few years, maybe—young children—mortgaged to the hilt. How would his or her family survive? How much they would miss!

Fifty or Sixty Years Old?

“Certainly they have lived a full life.” but then, when is a ‘full’ life reached? Now there are probably children in college—house almost paid off. Dreaming of seeing their children settled and happy. Seeing grandchildren—an extension of their love. So, not quite yet.

Sixty to Seventy Years Old?

“That’s it.” BUT, what if there is a spouse sharing that life? What happens after so many years—now suddenly alone! College tuition behind them. House, maybe, paid off. Perhaps their planned trips that go

along with newfound freedom—and of retirement dreams. Their children, now grown, will grieve and the grandchildren will be robbed of an important force in their lives.

Eighty and Up?

At least, then, we can say they lived a long life. We hope a ‘full’ life. Even then, however, the chances are someone will grieve.

It all comes down to whatever age of the loved one who died—there is grief. Granted, the grief *IS* different when you are dealing with a child’s (any age) death, a spouse’s death or a parent’s death, or the death of a sibling. We, bereaved parents, feel the grief of losing a child is the worst. However, a person who is close to his or her parents, having that umbilical-cord finally severed is extremely painful. The loss of a spouse, a brother or sister, when there was a close bond, can be devastating. What I am trying to say, is that we could all be kinder to one another by not being judgmental as to whether is it harder to lose someone at a young age or an older age—suddenly or through illness. It really is not relevant. The bottom line is, we are all in pain! Understanding another’s pain and sharing ours is all part of the process of healing. “Never judge another man, until you have walked ten paces in his footsteps.” that is what being a compassionate friend is all about.

~ Mary Ehmann, TCF, Valley Forge, PA

i. cry. for the life you lived and the one you didn’t. ~ Pinterest

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 & 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.



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~ 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 **\$50.45** during the 1st quarter!

2026 YTD = \$50.45

2025 YTD = \$171.37

~ Thank you for participating
& enjoy shopping! ~

FOURTH OF JULY

Each year on the Fourth of July we celebrate the birth of a great nation. A nation of people 'united' in a dream. It was through hope, determination and a bonded strength that the people of America strove to achieve their dream of freedom—to be a free nation.

Nothing, however, is achieved without a strong will. We, too, as bereaved parents, are fighting a battle to be free—free of the pain that has become a part of our waking days. We want to be happy. We want to be able to enjoy life again. YOU are one of those proud Americans.

Refuse to give up.

Fight for YOUR dream.

There is peace to be found in freedom.

~ TCF, Holmdel, NJ

Vacation

Summertime and the living is ... hard. Where to go for vacation? If we go to the favorite family place we are faced with the memories of our child's happy times there, and their absence now. If we go someplace new, they aren't there to share the beauty and adventure.

No matter where you go or what you do, grief does not take a vacation. You may as well pack it with luggage, along with a picture or two of your child, maybe one or two of those grief books you've been meaning to read, and spend some time with your companions, pain and sorrow. They say the only way out is through. Maybe a vacation is a time to get away from the regular routine and find a few quiet moments to think, feel, reflect, reconnect in some way with your child, and renovate your house of dreams.

~ Jan Bryant, NoShore TCF, BC



So, let the tears fall when they come.
Let the laughter rise when memories bring warmth.
Let grief and joy coexist. For they are not opposites.
They are just love in different forms.

~ Jameson Arasi, Pinterest

It's not foolish to hold on to a memory. Sometimes it's all we have left.

~from 'Golden Girls' TV show

Grandparents DAY



The death of a child is the most tragic thing that can happen to anyone. It affects so many lives—family, friends, and even strangers.

I lost my grandchild through death, and only a grandparent can understand the special love we have for our grandchildren and the loss we feel when the child dies. For grandparents, it is a double loss. Not only is your grandchild gone, but you also watch your child die each day.

The smile that was always on my daughter's face is no longer there. The hurt is so deep and there are so many questions. You feel helpless as a parent. You can't kiss the hurt away, as you did when she was a child. You have no answers for her questions, as you can barely understand your own feelings.

Each day I hope and pray for a little ray of sunshine to show on my daughter's face. I search for a little something to say or do that will comfort her. It seems that there is no end to the suffering.

As time has slowly gone by, I have seen the healing process begin. In time a ray of hope will shine on my daughter's face, and a smile will make her eyes light up again. She will turn to me for what little comfort I can give her. There will always be a part of me that is gone, but in time I will learn to live with the part that is still there.

~ Ruth Eaton, TCF, Savannah, GA

A laugh a day keeps the heart pumping.
A tear a day keeps the mind clear.
A smile a day gives joy to others.
A hug a day gives the hopeless hope.
A thought a day brings loved ones near.
A memory a day brings you closer to me.
Laughs, tears, smiles, hugs stitched with thoughts and memories—They're all in my days without you.

~ Pam Burden, TCF Augusta, GA



A LESSON IN GRAMMAR

I don't want anyone to quibble with me about whether my son's birthday is or was November 20th, because (a) it is, and (b) it was, and (c) it always will be. And as to whether I have two children, (a) I do, and (b) I did, and (c) I always will have.

~ Mary Cleckley, TCF, Atlanta, GA



"When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight."

~ Kahlil Gibran





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.

REMEMBERING

Friends may think we have forgotten when at times they see us smile. Little do they know the heartache that our smile hides all the while. Beautiful memories are wonderful things. They last till the longest day, they never wear out. They never get lost & can never be given away ... To some you may be forgotten, to others a part of the past. But to those who loved and lost you, your memory will always last ...

~ JoAnn Nida, TCF, Central Iowa, IA

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

SEPTEMBER

September brings such joy and such sorrow. I enjoy shopping with Travis for school clothes— even though each year it means all new jeans, shirts and shoes. What a joy! He has grown taller and it's a pleasure to watch him change from his first kindergarten days to this year's maturing fourth grader. And always, each year, I wonder about Jesse. When we're out shopping, and I see that certain shade of green, my heart skips a beat or two, how he would have loved that shirt! And I think of what a pleasure it would be to watch him change, too, from year to year.

And I wonder, would he think he was too old for a lunch box this year? (11 years) Would he want to buy his lunch? He never liked to buy it, he always wanted to take his own lunch pail, but, after all, he was six.

September ... full of joys and sorrows ... full of memories. Now they must last a lifetime. Always in my heart and mind, now and forever. Even though Jesse isn't with us, he's still our son, our child, a wonderful, precious joy; a gift from God, too soon gone Home!!

~ Kathy Barker, TCF, Sacramento, CA



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.

First-Time 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

- Sibling Corner -

Days in the Valley

An early morning phone call brought news that irreversibly changed my life. My parents called to tell me my younger brother had been killed in a car accident. They wept as I spoke to them. I had never heard my dad cry before. Numbly, I hung up the phone. I didn't cry. There was no time for tears. Flight plans had to be made, clothes packed. I had to think clearly and act quickly.

The 100-mile trip to the airport seemed especially long and dark as I drove alone that morning. Later, aboard the plane, I looked out the window and tried to comprehend what had happened. Maybe it wasn't him, I thought. Maybe they got him mixed up with someone else. I dreaded the scene that awaited me at home, yet I couldn't get there quickly enough. I longed to comfort Mom and Dad, to be with them.



Arriving in Des Moines, I was met by relatives. At last I could let myself cry. When I reached my parents home, I was relieved to finally grieve with them, but a terrible pain was burrowing deep within as the reality of what happened began to sink in, funeral arrangements were made. People gave their condolences, stacks of cards arrived daily. The pain remained. I sensed God's presence as friends and family gathered. Words meant nothing, but those who came and cried with us were the ones who gave comfort. They didn't quote bible verses. They didn't try to explain why it happened. They just hugged us and cried.

For almost a year I replayed again and again those events as if they had been stored on videotape. Every sight, every sound, every pain was as vivid as if it had happened the day before. Time has numbed the pain and faded the 'tapes' to some degree, but my life will never be the same. There will always be a hole in our family that cannot be filled.

I see life differently now, I've learned things that have made me

more mature. Tragic loss demands finding something meaningful in it or retreating into bitterness. When I said good-bye to my brother, I never dreamed it would be the last time I would see him. Words left unsaid echoed in my mind for many months. Now, taking time to say and do the things I used to put off is more important. Treating each opportunity to be with friends or loved ones as if it might be the last time I will see them gives me the incentive to resolve conflicts and say the things that need to be said.

Experts say the grieving process should end with the acceptance of death. Instead of accepting my brother's death, however, I have only acknowledged it. Death, like an unwanted visitor, doesn't have to be catered to, but it does have to be acknowledged for the healing to begin. I can't say I understand why my brother was killed, but God has given me strength to go on. Though at times it appeared that there was no way out of the valley, time has brought me renewed strength. Time does not heal all wounds, but it does bandage those it cannot heal.

~ Rick Bunkofski, TCF, North Center IA

WHEN A SIBLING DIES, IT IS LIKE A DEEP HOLE IMPLODES INSIDE OF YOU.
IT'S AS IF THE HOLE PENETRATES YOU AND LEAVES YOU GASPING FOR AIR.

~ Alan D. Wolfelt

H E L I V E S F O R M E

I shall see him in the beauties of the earth,
In the loveliness of summer sunsets,
And the loneliness of winter winds.
In the delicate new life of springtime trees,
In the blazing glory of fall's bright leaves.

I shall see him in the face of youth,
Seeking, straining for love and truth.
And in the peaceful face of age
Completing the journey of our days.

- ♥ I shall see him in the ocean's mighty power.
- ♥ I shall see him in the wonder of the stars.
- ♥ I shall see him in the face of happiness and care.
- ♥ I shall always see him everywhere.

~ E. Rita Asher, TCF, Cape Cod, MA



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



**JULY—AUGUST—SEPTEMBER
2026**



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