



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

April 2009 Newsletter

WNY Chapter, Batavia, NY 14020

We are pleased, yet saddened, to have you join us at our meeting of The Compassionate Friends. We hope that sharing your stories of the aspects of your journey through grief will enable you and your families to find a "new normal" in your life. We wish for you that you would eventually reach a state of peace where the wonderful memories you have of your children are more in the forefront of your heart and mind than the pain of your loss.



Upcoming Meetings



April 16, 2009

May 16, 2009

June 18, 2009

6:45 PM at Richmond Memorial Library
19 Ross Street, Batavia, NY 14020

National: The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
PO Box 3696 • Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696
Toll Free 877-969-0010 • Fax 630-990-0246
www.compassionatefriends.org

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Our web site: www.tcfofwny.org

To include your child or children on our web site, bring a photo along with a short story about them to a meeting. Pat will forward the information to our Webmaster.



The Compassionate Friends is an international, non-profit, self-help support organization for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. We are non-religious and have no membership fees. We offer friendship and understanding to families as they travel down the path of grief after the death of their beloved children.



OUR BIRTHDAY TABLE

Parents/Grandparents: you may bring photos and other mementos to the meeting during your child's birthday month. You may also bring a birthday cake or your child's special treat to share with those attending.



New Books in Our Library

Still to be Born - A Guide for Bereaved Parents Who Are Making Decisions About Their Future by Pat Schwiebert RN and Paul Kirk, MD

How to Survive the Loss of a Child - Filling the Emptiness and Rebuilding Your Life by Catherine M. Sanders, Ph.D.

When Life is Changed Forever - By the Death of Someone Near by Rick Taylor

Roses in December - Comfort for the Grieving Heart by Marilyn Willett Heavilin

On Grief and Grieving - Finding the Meaning of Grief Through the Five Stages of Loss by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler

Facing the Ultimate Loss: Coping with the Death of a Child by Robert J. Marx and Susan Wengerhoff Davidson

The Grief of Parents - When a Child Dies by Margaret Shandor Miles (Pamphlet)

When a Baby Dies by Martha Jo Church, Helene Chazin and Faith Ewald (Pamphlet)

Living with Loss and Grief by Julia Tugendhat

Remembering: The Death of a Child - Support and Healing; Hope and Inspiration by Robert R. Thompson, MD

We hope to create a library of informative, comforting books available for checking out. We have bookplates (a label to put on the first page indicating the donor and who it is in memory of.) They *do not* have to be new books.

Love Gifts

There are no dues or fees to belong to The Compassionate Friends. Your voluntary tax-deductible donations are our only source of funds. All proceeds given to our chapter are used within our Community for outreach and support bereaved families. Forms for donations are available at each meeting. All gifts are welcome and greatly appreciated.

We will be emailing newsletters to our parents and sister chapters who have email addresses. Please let us know your email address if we don't have it. Those with no email and not attending meetings will continue to receive them by mail.

Love Gifts



We thank the following for their Love Gifts and donations:

Sarah Cook - office supplies donated in memory of her brother Karl.

A Corporate Gift Card from Super Walmart, Veterans Highway, Batavia, NY

A Corporate Gift Card from Tops Market, Lewiston Rd., Batavia, NY



We are trying really hard to add to our bank account. If you need more tickets for our raffle, see Pat at our meeting, call her at 585-219-4720 or email her at wwpatsuw@comcast.net. She will get some to you ASAP. So far, we're doing well. Thanks to everyone who has been doing a great job! Pat and I will be at Corfu's IGA Store on Saturday, the 14th, to sell tickets. Stop by if you can.



**"I found the answer in my heart
for we are not apart
as long as memory is within my reach
I still can see him running on the beach. . ."
Judi Hinchliffe Sturge**

Our Children ~ Loved and Remembered

Let us remember the children who have left us too soon.

Aubrey, daughter of Jennifer Kubik
9/14 - 4/28



Thank You, Dear Friend

In a shaky voice I told you
How much I had lost
And what I'd do to get it back
No matter what it cost

You listened patiently to me
As I spoke of my fears
And I know it broke your heart
To see my falling tears

We spoke of what once was
And of what would be
About yesterday and tomorrow
And the changes in me

I am a prisoner of uncertainty
My world upside down
The life I knew as my normal
Can no longer be found

But you took my trembling hands
Gently in your own
And you lovingly reassured me
That I am not alone

The days ahead will be difficult
Many times I will fall
But I know you will pick me up
And help me through it all.

In memory of my loving son, Charlie (Rusty) Jackman,
Whom I miss more than words can ever describe.

© By Charles Jackman, 2008

**Spring Bursts Forth,
And So Will You and You and You**

Who could possibly disagree that we all look forward to spring? (For one thing, it means no more outrageously high fuel bills for a few months!) Most of all, we welcome all the evidence of new life after the seemingly endless cold, sometimes bleak and dreary days of winter. What a difference the new growth of leaves on the trees makes in the appearance of the landscape! There is the sudden burst of color in all the spring flowers and shrubs - from the crocus to the beautiful array of colorful azaleas to the fragrant peonies that burst into bloom at the end of May. Somehow, all of this gives us a news burst of energy as we throw off our heavy, warm, restrictive clothing and grab our gardening tools to plant the vegetable gardens and flowers beds. However, we still keep a sweater or a jacket close by for those times, now and then, which are too cool for comfort just yet.

So it is with us bereaved parents, for whom our whole world became a bleak, cold and desolate winter when a much-loved child was suddenly torn out of our lives. If you are at this point in your life now, then it is possible you may not be able even to be aware of all the beauty of the earth all around you now or in the summer or even in the gloriously colorful fall to come. If this is where you are now in your grief, be very patient with yourself. There are those of us who have gone through several springs without being aware of them. It was not even possible for us to smile, let alone laugh - and we were positive that we would *never* be able to do so. Does anyone remember the time he first laughed, as I do? It was at least six months after the death of my son, and I was visiting with a very close friend who made some comments, which must have struck just the right chord within me, and I **LAUGHED**. It was such a shock to hear that sound come from **ME** that I actually reeled back in my chair and asked, unbelievably, "Did I do that?" For me, that was the first small burst of spring coming back into my life! But, of course, I still had a long way to go.

Be assured - there can be a spring in your life again! But you will have to work for it. It won't come if you just sit back and do nothing. Only *you* can be the judge of what it is you should do. Although you do have very special needs at this time and it is important not to push yourself beyond the point of your endurance, it may be necessary in the beginning

to force yourself moderately to begin the work of building a new life for yourself. Eventually, you, too, will feel the first small burst of spring coming back into your life. During this time, you will still need the protective covering of an understanding Compassionate Friend, as we sometimes need the protective covering of our jackets and sweaters on chilly nights in the spring.

In time, *you* can be the Compassionate Friend helping other newly-bereaved parents. **BELIEVE THAT YOU CAN, AND KNOW THAT YOU WILL.**

Grace Remsberg
TCF, Harrisburg, PA



The Things I Didn't Say

If I could sit and talk to you
For just a little while,
To say the things I wish I'd said,
Like -

how I loved your smile,
how much I loved the sight of your face,
your voice, your eyes, your face
to watch you playing basketball
and to see you win a race.

You were so much a part of me,
The part that's gone away.
These memories you left become
More precious every day.

I pray that you can hear this
And God will let you see
The pride, the joy, the happiness
That your life gave to me.

Pat Fennell
TCF, Delmar/Albany, NY



The best angle to approach any problem
is the "try" angle.

Dani Rohr
TCF, Ventura County, CA



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.

We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope. The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes, but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain, just as your hope becomes my hope. We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances. We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships. We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief but others still feel a grief so fresh and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope. Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength, while some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression, while others radiate an inner peace. But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends, it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died. We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy, share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts, and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

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Margi DuBois for TCF
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