



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

November 2008 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

Note Change: November Meeting - Nov. 13, 2008
December 18, 2008
January 15, 2008
February 19, 2009
6:45 PM at Richmond Memorial Library
19 Ross Street, Batavia, NY 14020

For further information about our Chapter, or if you need to talk with someone, please contact Pat Wheeler, Co-founder and Facilitator, 585-219-4720 or email her at wwpatsuw@aol.com. For information about our monthly newsletter, please contact Margi DuBois, Co-founder & Treasurer, 585-343-2590, email her at margi_d@yahoo.com, or mail any articles, corrections or memorial donations to her at 3233 Pratt Rd., #7312, Batavia, NY 14020.

A member of the Rochester Chapter of TCF has set up a web site for our Chapter. www.tcfowny.org. It is now ready for viewing. Please submit a photo of your child or children along with a short story about them. For ideas for your story, please go to the Rochester TCF website. www.tcf.org/rochester. **Thank you, Becky! Great Job and we appreciate your effort.**



In each issue, we will remember our children - their birthdays and their remembrance dates.

Our Children's Birthdays

Donna Cone Brister, daughter of Rita Cone
11/1/60 to 6/26/08

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 for November 2008

Office Supplies donated by Sarah Cook, in memory of Wyatt Zuber, son of Pat Wheeler

"Our Children Remembered" Scrapbook Supplies donated by Margi DuBois, in memory of her son, Michael E. Pittaro

Butterfly Cookies for October's meeting donated by "Aunt Pat" Abrams, in memory of her nephew, Michael E. Pittaro, son of Margi DuBois

Website creation by Becky Price, Rochester NY TCF Chapter, in memory of all our children.

As the holidays approach, be good to yourself. If this is your first year of holidays without your children, it will be especially difficult. For some, the holidays will always be difficult. For others, they will get easier. You may choose to continue your holiday traditions (by setting a special place for your child at the table, etc.). However, for some parents and families, it's less painful to start new traditions. Take a vacation, cook a different meal (maybe your child's favorite). But make sure you take time for yourself - eat well, get your sleep and spend extra special time with your family



Excerpts from The ABCs of Grieving

By Rob Anderson

Grief Digest, Volume 5, Issue 4

Always be good to yourself.
Believe in your courage and your power.
Constantly reach out for ways to heal.
Do what's best for you.
Express yourself in positive ways.
Fight for the life of your loved one.
Give yourself time.
Heal at your pace, regardless of what others may expect.
It's okay to feel anything you want to feel.
Jump into a healing life with both feet.
Keep on truckin'.
Let your love keep you moving ahead.
Make the decision to heal.
Never ever, ever, ever, ever give up. Read that again.
Occasionally get away from your grief work.
Patiently, but persistently, push yourself.
QXZ - no, you're not going crazy. You're grieving.
Realize that it's okay to heal; it's okay to feel better.
Stay on track, stay positive, and stay strong.
Touch the lives of others through your healing.
Understand that your journey is survivable.
Victory can be yours.
Windows of opportunity.
Yesterday, today and tomorrow.



***Promise me you'll always
remember... You're braver than
you believe. Stronger than you
seem,
And smarter than you think.
Christopher Robin to Pooh***



I believe with perfect faith
That you are forever.
Your body may lay in the sorrowful ground
But your spirit soars with the eagles
Still rages at injustice
Reaches in loving kindness
Dances with the ecstasy of life that never ends
And laughs deeply in the belly
To cleanse us from our mortal sadness.
Others may not believe, but
Every day, your spirit comforts me.
Your voice still speaks within my heart.
And while I may long for the warmth of your hands
On my shoulders,
I can feel your love in God's plan.
I believe that with perfect faith
No loss is forever

Author unknown



"Your broken heart requires at least as much care as a broken bone. With proper care, you can be confident that you will heal. The same powerful forces that mend a broken bone will heal your emotional pain, but a wounded heart needs time and proper care to heal."

Harold Bloomfield, MD

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

The Compassionate Friends of WNY
447 Ellicott St., Batavia, NY 14020
Contact: Pat Wheeler • 585-219-4720
Email: wwpatsuw@aol.com • Web: www.tcfofwny.org

The Healing Journey
Excerpts from An Anthology for Bereaved
Siblings
Published by
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.

YESTERDAY, TODAY
AND TOMORROW

Yesterday

You were here and I took it for granted that you would always be here. Telling you I loved you and was proud of you seemed unimportant. There would be time for that when we were older - when we fought less and talked more.

Today

I know that time will never come, and I will never have the chance to say these things face-to-face. So I write them and think them and hope you know I mean them now and have always felt them.

Tomorrow

Each day, the pain and regrets of things left unsaid get easier to deal with. I have begun to realize that you knew how I felt because you felt the same way. And as more tomorrows turn into yesterdays, I will find peace in that knowledge. Someday, somewhere, we will meet again and I will have my chance then.

Shannon Odessa Stiener
TCF, Lowell, IN

SHE'S HERE BUT NOT

She's here, but she's there.
She's with us, but she's not.
She's right around the bend,
But then she's gone again.
She's far away but so near,
It's like she's gone but here again.

Stacy Sharp
TCF, Defiance OH

To My Brother

Wherever we look,
You are there.
You are the light
On the water.
You are the blossom
On the tree.
You are a thought,
And you are a feeling.
Wherever we are,
You are.

Martha Dubinsky
Chappaqua NY

You Did Not Die

You live in the beautiful wind that blows.
You live in the sound of birds that crow.
You live in the sun that shines so bright.
You live in the peaceful dark at night.
You live in a star I see in the sky.
You live in ocean waves that come in with the tide.
You live in the smell of flowers and grass.
You live in the summer that goes so fast.
You live in my heart that hurts so much.
You did not die, we only lost touch.

Shari Swirsky
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

BECAUSE

Because you can't feel me,
Doesn't mean I'm not there.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm not near.
Because you can't hear me,
Doesn't mean I don't speak.
Because you can't see me,
Doesn't mean I'm out of reach.
Because I am dead,
Doesn't mean I'm gone.

Beth Oldani
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

The Aftermath of Suicide

I had never experienced the death of a close loved one before my brother died. When David died, my world came crashing down around me, shattering me into a million pieces. My brother and I were close, but I had no suspicion that he was contemplating suicide and had been for a long time. The night my sister called to tell me he was dead is etched in my memory forever. If I shut my eyes, I can go back to that time and place almost three years ago and still hear her voice. It is a very painful memory and one that I don't call up, but it is there nonetheless.

The overwhelming feeling of shock, disbelief, numbness, despair, and sadness are very vivid. At the same time, I was outraged at what he had done to us, to me. How dare he do this! I couldn't even begin to guess how many times I said, "I can't believe this is happening."

The first six months was a confusing and emotionally draining period for me. I was obsessed with wanting to have answers, especially from him. I read many books on suicide, and finally, after reading Iris Boltions's *My Son, My Son*, I came to realize what she said was true: "You can ask why a million times but you finally have to let it go, because the person you need the answers from is not here to give them to you. If only for the sake of your own sanity, you have to stop asking why."

Our family drew closer together from this tragedy, and it made me more aware of how much I value and love them. I also had the support of a good friend who was willing to spend hours talking and crying with me. I still get very angry at my brother for changing our lives so irrevocably. That anger inevitably turns into sadness. I cannot see his smiling face, or hear his laughter, or watch him grow into adulthood. Yes, I had dreams for him too. He was an intelligent, warm, sensitive, and caring young man, and I was eager to see what direction his life would take. I can't help but wonder what he would be like today. I miss him very much.

I will never agree with his solution, but it was his choice to make and I have to learn to live with it. I am absolutely certain beyond a shadow of a doubt that I will see him again. Only then will I get answers to my questions. I have no choice but to wait until that time.

Nicki Wright
TCF, MO-KAN, Kansas

